

Mr Heffer dismissed for his defiance of Prime Minister

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Cheers greet 226 majority

Hugh Noyes
Parliamentary Correspondent

The Government's recommendation to continue membership of the EEC was approved in the Commons last night by a massive majority of 226. The voting was 396 to 170. The huge cheers greeted the announcement of the vote. Mr Wilson and other pro-EEC members looked delighted at the size of the Government majority of 226. Mr Heffer, Minister of State at the Department of Industry, was dismissed from his job by the Prime Minister last night for defying Mr Wilson's guidelines for ministerial conduct on the EEC referendum. The Commons earlier Mr Heffer tried out his threat to disobey the ruling that dissident ministers should not speak in Parliament against the Government's recommendation on membership. Mr Wilson said in a letter that Mr Heffer's deliberate speaking against the Government was the reason for his dismissal.



Mr Heffer, photographed yesterday before he left the House.

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Attack brings North Vietnamese within 37 miles of Saigon

From Peter Hazelhurst
Saigon, April 9
North Vietnamese infantry units, supported by heavy artillery and tanks, launched a fierce attack against Government troops defending the town of Xuan Loc at dawn this morning and penetrated Saigon's outer defence perimeter 37 miles north-east of the city. At the same time Vietcong insurgents attacked a Government post near Tan An, 30 miles south-west of the capital, and made an unsuccessful attempt to cut Route 4P, Saigon's lifeline to the rice-producing delta area. In what appears to be the beginning of the battle for Saigon, the North Vietnamese, armed with Chinese AK47 automatic rifles and hand grenades, charged Government positions around Xuan Loc, the capital of Long Khanh province, after their artillery had pumped 2,000 rounds of heavy shells into the town.

A spokesman for the Saigon military command said communist units had entered Xuan Loc today and the two sides had engaged in hand-to-hand fighting round the town. Communist units moved into positions four miles west of the city to cut Route 1, which would carry Government reinforcements from Saigon and Bien Hoa, the large air and military base 20 miles away. The dull thud of artillery shells exploding round Xuan Loc and the distant rattle of machinegun fire could be heard from rear positions of Government troops who were attempting to dislodge the communists from Route 1. Government troops were using mortars and light machine guns in a counter attack to flush communists out of the thick green bush which dominates the area. North Vietnamese troops hold positions on each side of the road and have so far prevented columns of reinforcements from moving eastwards to Xuan Loc. An infantry colonel told journalists that helicopters had spotted a large number of tanks moving westwards towards Xuan Loc. He complained bitterly that Saigon had failed to respond to his call for air support. According to the latest reports, a small number of North Vietnamese troops are operating west of Xuan Loc in the rubber and banana plantations which stretch back westwards towards Bien Hoa. Their proximity to Saigon was demonstrated this morning when 26 rockets fell on the base, killing two soldiers. In the meantime, 30 miles south-west of Saigon, communists, reported to be members of the Vietcong, made an attempt to capture a section of Route 4P, the link between Saigon and the delta region. The insurgents attacked an outpost on a disused American airfield near the town of Tan An. The insurgents were repulsed by a battalion of infantrymen quartered at the disused air base for rest. Evidence during the past week suggests that North Vietnamese and Vietcong strategists are attempting to isolate the capital in all directions and force President Thieu to draw his defence perimeter close to the outskirts of the city. Saigon remained calm today despite rumours that the communists were almost at the gates of the city. The black market rate for dollars went up as thousands of people began to transfer their assets overseas. The Army reported today that the deputy commander of the military region around Saigon was found shot dead in his office last night hours after a young pilot attempted to bomb President Thieu's palace. It is not known whether the two events are connected. Map, and reports from Hanoi and Phnom Penh, page 8



The Mallard, holder of the world speed record for steam locomotives, setting out yesterday from Clapham for transfer by rail to the new National Railway Museum at York.

Savernake Horn is saved

The Savernake Horn, an ancient aliphant or carved elephant's tusk, recorded as the great treasure of Savernake Forest in Camden's *Britannia* of 1586, has been bought for the British Museum. The price is believed to be about £25,000. Mr Jenkins, Minister with responsibility for the arts, said yesterday that the Government was granting £50,000, with an advance of £25,000, to the museum's 1975-77 purchase grant. Sir John Pope-Hennessy, director of the museum, said last night that contributions had come from the Pilgrim Trust and the National Art Collections Fund.

Sir Walter Scott letters found

Toronto, April 9.—Research workers at the University of Guelph have found 44 letters written by Sir Walter Scott in a paper bag among 14,000 items in a collection of eighteenth and nineteenth century documents from Edinburgh.

NHS threatened by increase in doctors seeking work abroad

By Neville Hodgkinson
An enormous increase in the number of doctors seeking to leave the United Kingdom for jobs abroad is posing a new threat to the National Health Service. Inquiries by *The Times* show that medical emigration rose sharply in 1974 and may reach a disastrous level in 1975. There has been a fivefold increase in one year in the number taking the qualifying examination for entry as medical practitioners into the United States. The examination is taken twice yearly, and in 1974 there were 1,019 candidates, of whom 944 passed. This year at the January sitting alone 2,517 doctors registered to take the examination. The Philadelphia-based Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates says that registrations for the July sitting appear to be even higher, making a possible total for the year of more than 5,000, nearly a tenth of the total workforce of NHS hospital doctors and general practitioners. That compares with totals of 704 and 828 respectively at the 1972 and 1973 sittings, when 646 and 739 passed. Although the registration figures are not strictly comparable with the total of those taking the examination, the drop-out rate in Britain is very low. Dr Roy Castleline, executive director of the commission, said yesterday that many of the doctors' names suggested Asian origin. That raises the alarming possibility that foreign doctors from the Indian subcontinent, on whom the health service relies heavily, are beginning to leave Britain in a steady stream. Forty per cent of NHS hospital appointments are held by immigrant doctors, mostly from India or Pakistan. More and more immigrant doctors have been leaving the service. Dr Castleline said that about three quarters of those taking the commission's examination in Britain emigrated to America. Many of the British-born doctors returned after gaining one or two years' experience in American hospitals, but those born overseas tended to stay in the United States. Inquiries received by the British Medical Association from doctors wishing to go abroad rose from 20 in the first three months of 1973 to 108 in the same period of 1974, and 410 up to the end of last month. Emigration of doctors to other countries, although less pronounced, shows a similar trend. Australia received 235 inquiries from British doctors in 1973, and 81 applications for assisted passage. The figures in 1974 were 642 and 220. In the first two months of this year there were 131 inquiries. That rate, if it continued, would give an annual total of 786 inquiries. There were 64 applications for assisted passage and/or migrant entry visa, an annual rate if continued of 384 doctors leaving Britain for Australia. Canada still attracts about a thousand foreign doctors a year, and 338 arrived from Britain in 1973. In South Africa 4,500 British doctors arrived in the first three months of 1974, compared with 2,500 over the same period in 1973. Many British doctors are going to the Middle East, Saudi Arabia received nearly 300 replies in response to advertisements in the *British Medical Journal* offering two-year contracts.

Glasgow dustcart drivers back to work on Monday

Glasgow dustcart drivers voted yesterday to return to work on Monday, provided the city council agreed to their demands. The drivers had been "scavenged" by the council's refuse collectors. The leaders are to meet council officials and the Transport and General Workers' Union today to discuss the removal of the 40,000 tons of rubbish from the city. Page 2

Mr Soares 'fights' democracy

Mr Soares, Minister of State at the Department of Industry, was dismissed from his job by the Prime Minister last night for defying Mr Wilson's guidelines for ministerial conduct on the EEC referendum. The Commons earlier Mr Heffer tried out his threat to disobey the ruling that dissident ministers should not speak in Parliament against the Government's recommendation on membership. Mr Wilson said in a letter that Mr Heffer's deliberate speaking against the Government was the reason for his dismissal.

All-England Cup final

West Ham beat Ipswich 2-1 and Fulham beat Birmingham 1-0, after extra time, in FA Cup semi-final replays. This brings about the first all-England final since 1962 and the second in history. In the first leg of their European Cup semi-final Leeds beat Barcelona 2-1. Page 12

Plutonium warning

Chemical Society is developing a warning system to forestall pollution from waste substances that are likely to have harmful effects on the environment. The scheme should also be able to discover how to cope with an accidental leak or leak. Page 2

Rights of children

Proposals to strengthen children's rights, giving them more legal representation in proceedings, were proposed yesterday by Professor Hugh Bennett, Head of the Department of Law at Hull University. He is critical of the Children Bill before Parliament, which limits the joint role of legal advisers. Page 4

Arrived in London

Pressed areas exist in inner London, factories should be encouraged to move to the suburbs, a report says. The report is part of a study by the City of London Corporation. Pages 2 & 3

Lower interest fails to boost lending

Despite reductions in lending rates by clearing banks the volume of lending has failed to pick up. During the month to March 12 advances by London clearing banks fell by £158m, a drop which would not have been expected on normal seasonal grounds. Deposits by United Kingdom residents also fell. Page 19

Mr Varley is ready to do battle with oil giants for a stake in North Sea

By David Young
Britain's new nationalized oil corporation yesterday announced that it will be firmly under the control of Mr Eric Varley, the Secretary of State for Energy, and one which he is adamant will never fall into the "lame duck" category. It will begin its operations in the North Sea partnership with Gulf and Conoco, by virtue of the fact that among its first tasks will be the takeover of the oil interests of the National Coal Board, and later in partnerships with other oil companies negotiated by the Government. Mr Varley is understood to be prepared to do battle with companies such as Shell and Exxon for a stake in their North Sea operations, but it seems that most other companies have already accepted the inevitability of having the British National Oil Company, as the corporation will be called, as a dominant partner in their operations. He described the publication of the Government's Petroleum and Submarine Pipelines Bill yesterday as a major step in fulfilling the manifesto pledge of securing effective control of oil and gas resources off Britain's coasts for the people. "We have started the process of negotiating with the oil companies to secure a majority stake for the state in commercial oilfields discovered under existing licences. This participation has been conceded in principle by Burren and Deminor, which has taken over Uranco's holding in the Thistle field." Mr Varley expects most of the companies to have agreed to the Government's proposals by the end of the year and the companies will be aware that the attitude they adopt could govern whether the next round of licences for exploration in the Western approaches to the Moray Firth are being issued. The Secretary of State said that the BNOC, which will have its headquarters in Scotland in an area yet to be selected, would not be a "savage" body but one whose chairman and executives will have ideas of their own and put forward policies. Despite this, the Bill at this stage puts overall control of the BNOC firmly in the hands of the Secretary of State. He will appoint the BNOC's board, which will have between six and 20 members and all plans and budgets will have to be agreed with him. Mr Varley said there was nothing new in the idea of a state oil corporation and every country except the United States had either a state oil corporation or state participation. The BNOC would develop into a concern like any commercial oil company, Mr Varley said, and it would operate commercially and pay salaries as attractively as those offered by existing companies. Already several people in the industry had expressed willingness to work for BNOC, but despite this the Government was aware of the paucity of available skilled oil exploration and production talent. A National Oil Account will be set up into which will flow all the BNOC's revenues, and from which the BNOC will be paid the sums required to meet its needs in accordance with its agreed operating plan and budget. This account will be controlled by the Secretary of State and any surplus in it—the Government is anticipating that the annual surplus in the early 1980s will be between £2,000m and £3,000m—will go into the Consolidated Fund. Continued on page 19, col 1

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HOME NEWS

Early warning scheme aimed at beating pollution by chemicals

From Pearce Wright
Science Correspondent
York

An early warning system to forestall pollution damage by chemicals is being developed for the Department of the Environment by the Chemical Society. When complete it should prevent the discharge of waste substances that later turn out to have undesirable physical, chemical and biological properties. As the trouble with pesticides showed, dangers were not noted for years. It should also avoid situations in which emergency services are unable to discover quickly how to cope with an accidental spillage or leak of a particular substance.

The early warning system is a response by the Department of the Environment to a recommendation by the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution for a more effective system for information collection, storage and distribution.

The scheme is based at a computer centre at Nottingham of the United Kingdom Chemical Information Service, which is run by the Chemical Society. Dr J. Barrett, president of the society, disclosed the scheme in his address to the annual chemical congress in York yesterday.

A description of the system was given by Mr Peter Hughes, of the Chemical Information Service. He said the scheme would use several information sources and data bases with material necessary for environmental protection, but they were not well coordinated and did not provide a response to urgent

inquiries. Recording and monitoring of the use of chemicals and their release was needed.

Any early warning procedure in the United Kingdom had to be compatible with equivalent international systems either planned or in existence, he said.

General environmental information systems faced formidable difficulties of scale, complexity and diversity of the subject matter covered. He referred to a definition adopted by the United Nations environment conference to include anything that affected any aspect of human, animal or plant existence. An information system to embrace all that would not be technically possible at present.

The approach chosen by the Department of the Environment, and being adopted by the United Nations environment programme, was that of directing inquiries to the best sources of information. The chemical reference service, in addition to organizations specializing in chemistry and chemical engineering, covered aspects of medicine and biology, social sciences, civil engineering and architecture, zoology, botany, and earth sciences.

The system being developed by the United Nations was similar. In principle any inquiry could have access to any of the information in the system. Mr Hughes said the EEC was also compiling an inventory of research programmes, information and documentation services, and centres of skills relating to those issues.

Snow chaos in Kent and Scotland

Snow blocked roads in Kent and Scotland yesterday, and fell in most parts of Britain. In the south, Kent was worst affected with about six inches of snow in some areas blocking many minor roads. In Scotland, the A9 from Perth to Inverness was blocked in places, and so were several other main roads.

The RAC warned motorists to use great care because of icy patches, and said that parts of Berkshire and Oxfordshire were particularly dangerous.

A helicopter from Aberdeen was called out in a snowstorm and force-nine gale yesterday to find a North Sea trawler and pick up the crew, who were believed to have suffered a heart attack. He was taken to Aberdeen City Hospital.

The search will be resumed today in the Cairngorms for a cross-country skier, Mr Stanley Davies, aged 51, of Hertford, missing since Monday. Last night about 70 men from five mountain rescue teams, and a woman, Mrs Mollie Porter, leader of the Cairngorm Mountain Rescue Team, returned to Aviemore after using dogs in a vain attempt to find him.

Council's stake in tour firm for £71,000

A Labour-controlled council has bought a 10 per cent interest in a holiday company, Horizon Midland, for £71,000 despite objections from the Conservative Opposition that buying shares with ratepayers' money might be illegal.

Mr Michael Cowan, chairman of Nottingham County Council's finance committee, said yesterday that the purchase was aimed at ensuring that the company should continue to operate flights from the East Midlands airport, in which the council has a one-third interest. He said the council acted after taking legal advice.

Council officers 'pocketed cash from fair'

Birmingham corporation catering department lost £5,000 in six months while it was being run by one of two men accused of fraud, it was alleged at Birmingham Crown Court yesterday.

Mr Stephen Brown, QC, for the prosecution, said the department supplied all the food and drink for a summer fair at Nuneaton, in 1973, organized by Ford, but two senior council officers pocketed money paid by customers and the public.

Geoffrey Joseph Roughley, aged 44, of Longdon Road, Knowle, West Midlands, former Birmingham corporation catering manager, and John Norman Charles Hayes, 40, of the city's outside catering department, of Seddick Mill, Chaddesley Corbett, Worcestershire, pleaded not guilty to 10 charges of conspiracy to steal, dishonestly obtaining £55,424 from Ford, forgery, uttering a false document, theft of four refrigerators, theft of £1,503, obtaining £187.94, obtaining £84.75 and the theft of those two amounts.

The trial continues today.

American holds on to his chess lead after draw

From Harry Golombek
Chess Correspondent
Birmingham

With three rounds still to go in the Zetters grandmaster chess tournament in Birmingham, the American player Matulovic was still in the lead yesterday with the fine score of 9½ points. He had a quick draw with his compatriot Chellistop in the twelfth round, but his chief rival, Matulovic, had rather the worst of the struggle with the junior world champion Tony Miles. The game was adjourned with Miles a pawn to the good, but with a rook and pawn ending in which all the pawns were on the same side and this looks a theoretical draw.

Convention doomed, Vanguard suggests

From Christopher Walker
Belfast

With violence increasing in Northern Ireland, leading members of the Vanguard Unionist Party stated yesterday in Belfast that there was no possibility that the forthcoming constitutional Convention would produce a solution resembling that envisaged by the Government.

Vanguard is one of three parties composing the powerful United Ulster Unionist Council which is expected to win a comfortable majority in the elections three weeks from today. The coalition's chances have been further improved by the partial resumption of the Provisional IRA's bombing campaign.

Although Vanguard's hard-line election manifesto will not be released until the middle of next week, it is understood that it will emphasize that the only form of "power-sharing" with Roman Catholics that will be considered would be in local government.

Vanguard leaders, who include Mr William Craig and Mr Ernest Baird, yesterday dismissed suggestions that the Convention might sit even as long as the initial six months allowed for by the Government.

Over the past few weeks, British officials at Stormont and Westminster have been hoping that initially the Convention might meet and amicably discuss fringe issues on which Roman Catholic and Protestant politicians might agree.

But any chance of that was firmly dismissed by the Vanguard leaders, which plays an important role in shaping the overall policy of the "loyalist" coalition. Mr Baird, deputy leader of Vanguard, said: "There is no point in talking about other things until the essential superstructure has been established."

Those latest indications of the difficulties facing the British Government came when many politicians have dismissed the ceasefire as existing in name only.

Although informal contacts between the Government and the Provisional Sinn Féin were still being maintained yesterday through the intermediaries of the IRA, both sides said the situation had reached its lowest ebb since the ceasefire on February 10.

Dublin Bill: Steps were taken in Dublin last night to speed the Criminal Law Jurisdiction Bill, which provides for terrorist suspects to appear in court where they are arrested, regardless of where in Ireland the alleged offence was committed (the Press Association reports).

Mr Patrick Cooney, Minister for Justice, told the Dail that the Bill, which was drafted after the Sunningdale agreement between Britain and the republic, could be introduced in the Senate within a few days.

Approval for the transfer to the Senate was granted by 51 votes to 59. But there may still be delays because of the Dail's heavy pressure of business. Some estimates indicate that the Bill may not be discussed until the end of the summer.

Younger black workers worse off for jobs than their parents. Inner London needs factories, report urges

By Peter Evans
Home Affairs Correspondent

There are depressed areas in Inner London, a study for three government departments, says today. Dr Graham Lomas, its director, said yesterday that the policy of the past 25 years should be reversed and more factories should be encouraged. But also more service industries should be encouraged to leave.

His report, *The Inner City*, says that a better, coordinated strategy is needed for incomes, housing, employment and transport. The report, published by the London Council of Social Services, is the clearest evidence yet of the deprivation which makes for bitterness among young blacks in the inner city.

Lambeth, where there is friction with the police and controversy over mugging, is so badly off for jobs and housing that it deserves the description of depressed area, Dr Lomas says.

In the inner south zone of London, centred on Brixton, only 20 jobs are available for every 100 people out of work.

Up to the past five months, in which the general employment position has deteriorated, the levels of coloured jobs have been contrary to the general lowering of unemployment in London.

Judged by the employment rates, younger black workers are worse off than their parents. Jobs have to be provided near homes and more encouragement given to migration to new towns, otherwise retraining will be wasted. More appropriate retraining is needed in any case, Dr Lomas says.

Black people, like workers elsewhere, are having to travel long distances to work, up to 70 miles or more daily on a round trip. Yet, Dr Lomas said yesterday, the traditional transport systems in this country have to a large extent broken down. One irony is that London Transport runs its own buses to get employees to and from work.

The report says: "The working man's pay packet will no longer of itself support a family in London." Dr Lomas adds:

"Two thirds of married women in London have a job."

He gives a bleak picture of what black people face. While some are moving into suburbs, other black communities are clinging to places like Brixton, perhaps because they feel more secure there.

The argument with Mr Enoch Powell, Dr Lomas said yesterday, was not over the issue of numbers, but what was to be done. "We have to recognize that we have a large coloured population that is growing because people are marrying and having children."

The report says that in the 12 months mid-1974 to mid-1975, 3,100 people emigrated from Britain to the West Indies, while 2,800 entered England and Wales.

Of London Transport employees, it says: "Many of the Barbadians who were recruited in the West Indies 18 years ago are still in appalling housing conditions of these and other immigrants who came here in the late 1950s are undoubtedly returning home."

A smaller group are returning home to retire. The trend will be affected by the economic social security agreements between Britain and Jamaica signed on October 20, 1972, which allows people who have paid social security contributions here to claim the retirement pension in Jamaica.

"The value of a pension in Kingston (Jamaica) compared with Brixton may well prove a consideration to be reckoned with; and a pattern may soon emerge of grandparents retiring to the Caribbean, leaving their children behind."

The study, a preliminary one, was carried out with the help of grants totalling £1,560 from the Department of the Environment, the Department of Employment and the Home Office. It is one of a series of studies in the Home Office Advisory Committee on Race Relations Research.

The Inner City (Study directed by Dr Graham Lomas, London Council of Social Services, £2.25). Need for strategy, page 16

Drivers vote to end Glasgow strike

From Ronald Faux
Glasgow

Glasgow dustcart drivers voted yesterday to end their three-month unofficial strike and return to work on Monday, provided all troops have left the city. After a meeting of 400 men, the strike leaders said the drivers had been starved back to work. They would be returning in a bitter and disgusted mood.

Even now, there are some doubts that the strike, which has badly soured relations between the workers and the corporation, will end smoothly on Monday.

Mr Allan, Minister of State at the Scottish Office, indicated in the Commons yesterday that, provided the men agreed to return to deal with the health hazard created by the dumps of refuse, the troops would be removed from the city on Friday.

There will be a meeting today between the strike leaders, corporation officials and the Transport and General Workers' Union to discuss how to remove the 40,000 tons of rubbish still lying around. Contractors may be called in.

Councillor Richard Dwyer, leader of the Labour administration in Glasgow, said yesterday that the council was delighted by the decision.

During the strike the men rejected the offer of a bonus that would have given them £93 a week until the backlog of rubbish had been cleared. Mr Dwyer indicated yesterday that when the men returned, if they worked longer and harder, they would be paid a bonus until the dumps had gone.

New paper's plan for afternoon edition opposed

Local leaders of seven unions in the newspaper industry last night opposed plans for an afternoon edition of the *Scottish Daily News*, which provides for a newspaper planned by former employees of the Beaverbrook organization in Glasgow.

Union officers representing journalists, production and maintenance workers said after a conference on plans for the paper that the implications of a 24-hour newspaper would necessitate detailed investigation and negotiation. "Any resultant agreements would require to be ratified by the unions at national level," a statement said.

Press emphasis on strikes decried

By a Staff Reporter

Emphasis on the reporting of industrial disputes in newspapers and on television has done Britain's export trade much harm, the Confederation of British Industry said yesterday.

In evidence to the Royal Commission on the Press the CBI stated: "There is little doubt that overseas competitors have an exaggerated idea of Britain's strike record and delivery performance."

The CBI alleged that over-emphasis on the reporting of strikes also influenced foreign firms considering whether to invest in Britain.

It must be remembered that the actual reporting of an industrial dispute can be an important factor determining the course of that dispute," the CBI added. "Sometimes a press report can harden attitudes on both sides, thus hindering negotiations."

Sometimes reporting can build up unofficial strike leaders, and make intervention by full-time trade union officials more difficult.

The CBI said industry had little cause to complain about the press, although there were examples of inaccurate and biased reporting in newspapers. The CBI would be happy to help set up pilot schemes under which trainee journalists would

spend some time in a company. The CBI opposed the establishment of an advertising revenue board, the introduction of a differential newspaper subsidy, the manipulation of government advertising, or the extension of industrial democracy "whose main purpose is the limitation of editorial independence."

"In particular, we believe that closed-shop arrangements which could limit the freedom of the editor by prohibiting anyone who is not a member of a particular union against the publication of news."

The CBI criticized the Press Association for mixing comment with news. "In recent years a tendency towards the lowering of standards and reliability has become noticeable," it said.

"This can produce oversimplifications which in themselves may not be serious, but which when further 'processed' by the recipients of copy lead to distortions and a very serious departure from the original facts."

Although opposed to any subsidy of the press, the CBI recognized that over-emphasis in newspapers, particularly in Fleet Street, if the royal commission decided that correcting this beyond the resources of the industry, the CBI would

not be averse to seeing government money used "on a single, once-for-all operation" to end over-emphasis.

The CBI's evidence was prepared by a working party under the chairmanship of Lord Robert, former chairman of the National Coal Board.

Broadcasting Council: A broadcasting council similar to the Press Council should be established to hear complaints against television, the Confederation of British Industry recommended in its evidence to the Auzan committee on broadcasting yesterday.

It said: "We have no doubt that existing complaints procedures are inadequate. A sensible, straightforward and easily accessible method of airing grievances, and if necessary remedying abuses is essential. At the moment, it does not exist."

The CBI suggested that the proposed council should be financed by the BBC and the independent television companies but have an independent chairman and some independent members, including representatives of industry and the trade unions.

Many industrialists, perhaps a majority, were suspicious of broadcasting, particularly television coverage of industrial disputes.

Rail workshop supervisors call off overtime ban

By Alan Hamilton
Labour Staff

The two-week overtime ban by 5,000 British Rail workshop supervisors, which has caused widespread train cancellations and delays, was called off yesterday when union leaders agreed to accept a new pay offer.

Because of the backlog of essential maintenance work on locomotives and rolling stock, train services will not return to normal until the end of next week.

Executive committees of the five unions representing the workshop supervisors agreed yesterday to accept the proposals made by British Rail on Tuesday, and ordered an immediate end to the industrial action. The supervisors will get an extra £3 a week back-dated to last April. Most of them will receive immediate lump-sum payments of about £145.

Supervisors work in British Rail's regional maintenance workshops and in locomotive and rolling-stock building works.

The dispute arose from last year's major pay reorganization agreement for all 200,000 rail operating and clerical staff. It gave a wide variety of increases ranging up to £10 a week more for train drivers. Workshop supervisors won a 6½ per cent increase across the board.

The Railway Staff National Tribunal, which drew up the awards, proposed additional payments of between £70 and £145 a year for supervisors, depending on their grade. The railway unions said that all supervisors should receive the maximum payment of £145, and argued that some lower-grade men were earning less than the men they supervised.

Shipping union rejects a 20 pc increase

By Our Labour Staff

Union leaders of 47,000 Merchant Navy officers yesterday rejected a 20 per cent pay offer from the General Council of British Shipping, which they said was an improvement when talks re-open next Wednesday. A similar offer is expected to be made, and rejected, when negotiations open today on behalf of 42,000 Merchant Navy seamen.

Yesterday's offer was intended to allow for increases in the cost of living since last year's settlement. It would have abolished the £4.40 a week threshold payments which officers have been receiving.

The shipowners also offered better hours and conditions, including a proposal that salaries should be based on a normal working year of 1,912 hours, the average in shore-based industry. They rejected a claim that this year's agreement should include further cost-of-living increases.



New impression of Lesley Whitte's killer.

Actor will simulate girl's killer

From Clive Borrell
and Arthur Osman
Kidsgrove

After three months of police inquiries into the kidnapping and murder of Lesley Whitte, Scotland Yard detective expect today to be a turning point in their investigations.

In Kidsgrove, today on the northern edge of the Potteries which for a month has been the centre of a manhunt for operational cost of which approaches £12,000, an actor hired by the police will wear shabby clothing which the police are confident the killer abandoned in the 60th draft shaft at Bathpool Park, where Miss Whitte's body was last found hanging by wire ligatures on March 7.

Under the direction of Commander John Morrison, he of the Yard's murder squad, the actor, who has not been named, will retrace the steps of the killer, who must have taken in Janu and February after abducting Miss Whitte, aged 17, from her home at Hildesley, Solihull, and secreting her underground in the park's drainage system.

The simulation of the killer's movements in an about park by an actor is thought to be unprecedented in murder investigations in Britain, although the police have employed one of their members to pose as a murderer in a past case.

Before today's opera Commander Morrison also tends to disclose certain details so far he has refused to do. This move, coupled with the publication yesterday of new details, is said to be part of the Yard's strategy to put a stop to the face detectives feel know so well.

Toning down cement report denied

The Department of the Environment last night ordered a report on alumina cement to be revised to avoid public panic.

The draft report on a quick-drying cement, used in the construction of a 35,000-building form the basis of a clause recommendations to authorities next month, prepared by the Building Research Establishment.

Construction News, the industry journal, says today's ministerial statement is intended to assure the public and to ease the draft to be revised to avoid any public panic.

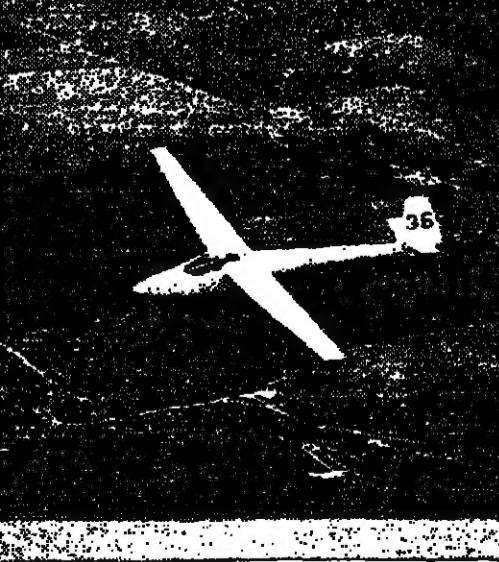
Official approved for the use of the cement was withdrawn in January after colleges the buildings. The cement has been closed and owners of built with the cement have been unable to sell building societies will advance mortgages.

COUNTRY LIFE

Summer in Britain Number

COUNTRY LIFE

SUMMER IN BRITAIN NUMBER



Hill of Monks and Quarrymen
Roy Christian looks at the countryside around Eresdon 1311, Leicestershire, with its ancient church and Saxon carvings.

Garden Among the Orchards
Anthony Huxley describes the informal and naturalistic gardens of Crittenden Manor, near Matfield, in the Kentish Weald.

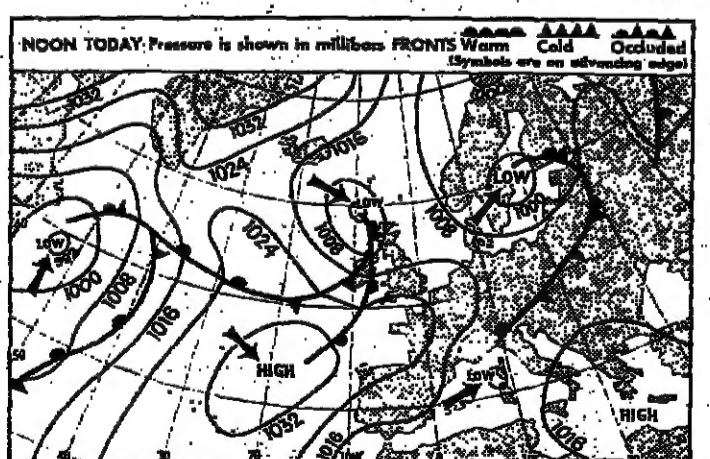
With Clouds as Stepping-stones
Ann Welch writes about gliding in Britain today, and the problems and rewards facing the potential glider pilot.

From Goshawks to Grebes
Arthur Gilpin discusses some of the many species of birds to be seen in Inverness-shire's wide variety of habitats.

Underwater Nature Reserve?
Yvonne Williams considers the suitability of the Isle of Lundy, in the Bristol Channel, as a centre for underwater studies.

On sale now 35 pence

Weather forecast and recordings



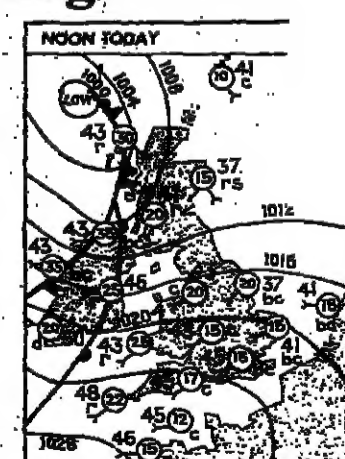
Today
Sun rises: 6.17 am
Moon rises: 5.28 am
Sun sets: 7.48 pm
Moon sets: 6.54 pm
New Moon: Tomorrow.
Lighting up: 8.18 pm to 5.45 am.
High water: London Bridge, 2.2 am, 6.3m (22.4ft); 2.26 pm, 7.0m (22.9ft).
Avonmouth, 7.35 am, 12.2m (40.0ft); 11.31 am, 6.1m (20.0ft); 11.47 pm, 6.3m (20.8ft).
Hull, 6.26 am, 6.8m (22.3ft); 6.29 pm, 5.9m (22.6ft).
Liverpool, 11.33 am, 8.7m (28.7ft); 11.55 pm, 8.7m (28.6ft).

A depression approaching NW Scotland is expected to move SE through W districts.

Forecasts for 5 am to midnight:
London, SE, central S England, East Anglia, E Midlands: Mainly dry, sunny periods, becoming cloudy later, outbreaks of rain or sleet; wind NW, light, backing.

WEATHER REPORTS YESTERDAY MIDDAY: c. cloud; f. fair; r. rain; s. sun; m. snow.

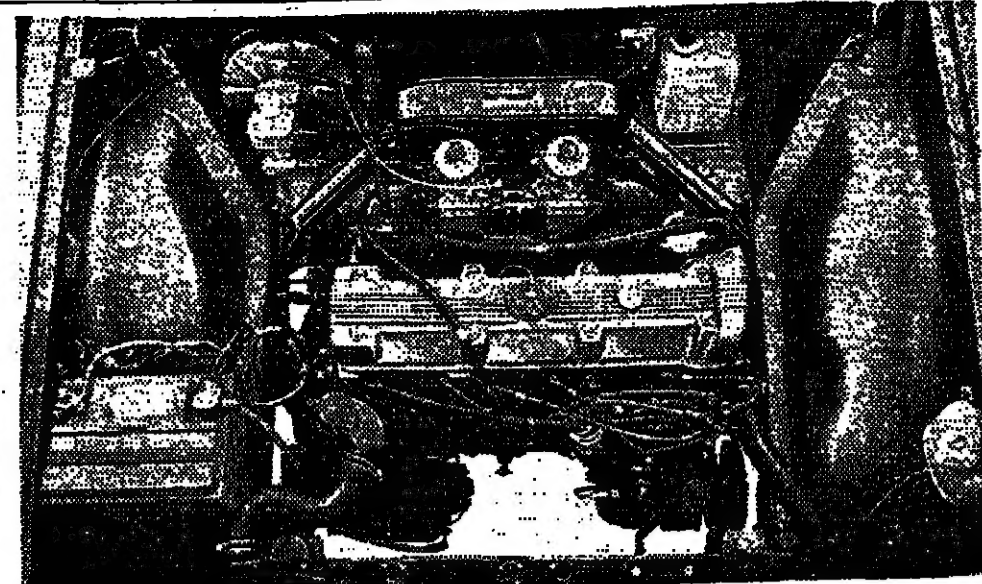
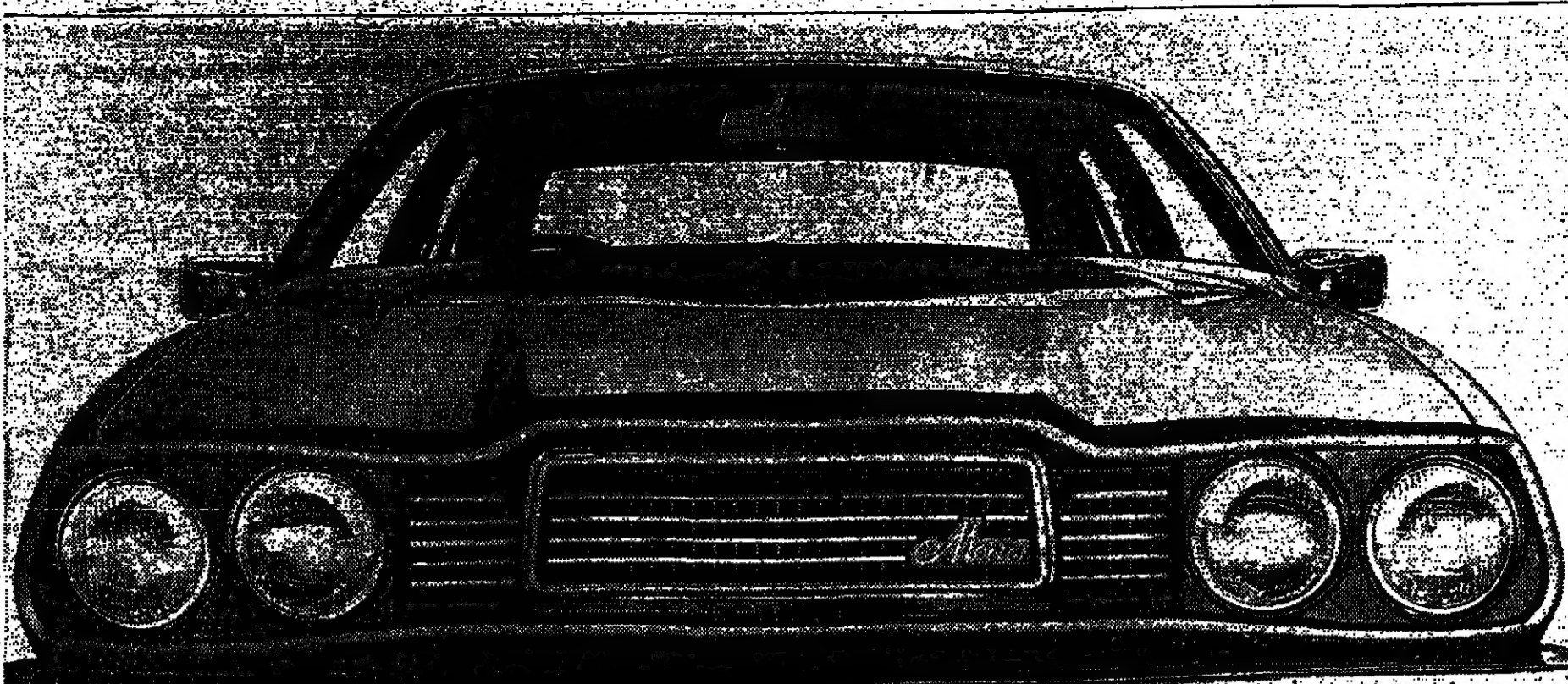
SW, moderate or fresh; max temp 8°C (46°F).
SE, NE England: Sunny periods, becoming cloudy with rain or sleet; wind S, fresh to strong; max temp 7°C (45°F).
Channel Islands, SW England: Sunny periods, becoming cloudy with rain, clearing later in day. SW, veering W, moderate or fresh; max temp 9°C (48°F).
Wales, NW, central N England, W Midlands: Sunny early, becoming cloudy with rain and snow on hills, brighter later; wind SW, veering NW, moderate or fresh; max temp 8°C (46°F).
N Ireland, Argyll, SW Scotland, Glasgow, Lakes District, Isle of Man: Cloudy, rain times, snow on high ground, becoming brighter with showers later; wind SW to S, veering NW, moderate or fresh; max temp 7°C (45°F).
Outlook for tomorrow, and Saturday: Cloudy, rain or sleet at times; snow on high ground, becoming brighter by Saturday.



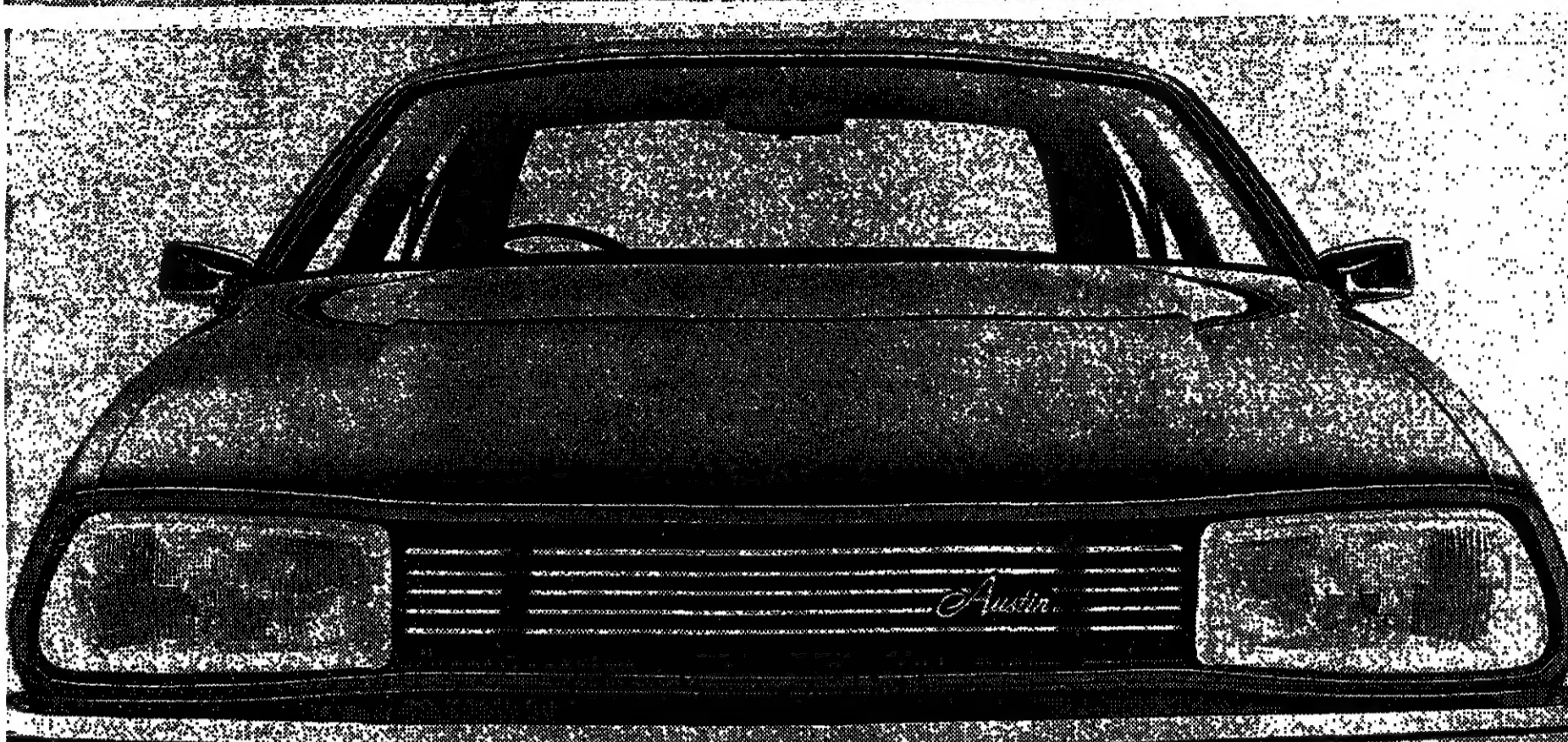
with return to wintry showers and bright intervals; frost at night. In Sea passages: S North Sea, 53 per cent rain, 24 hr to 7 pm, becoming W, strong, becoming moderate, becoming rough. English Channel (E), St George's Channel: Wind W, fresh, becoming SW, strong, sea moderate, becoming rough. Irish Sea: Wind SW, strong; becoming W, strong; sea rough, becoming very rough.

Yesterday
London: Temp: max, 7 am to 7 pm, 7°C (45°F); min, 7 pm to 7 am, 1°C (34°F). Humidity, 7 pm, 68 per cent. Rain, 24 hr to 7 pm, 11.5 mm. Sun, 24 hr to 7 pm, 9.5. Bar, mean sea level, 7 pm, 1016.2 millibars, rising.
1,000 millibars = 29.53 in.

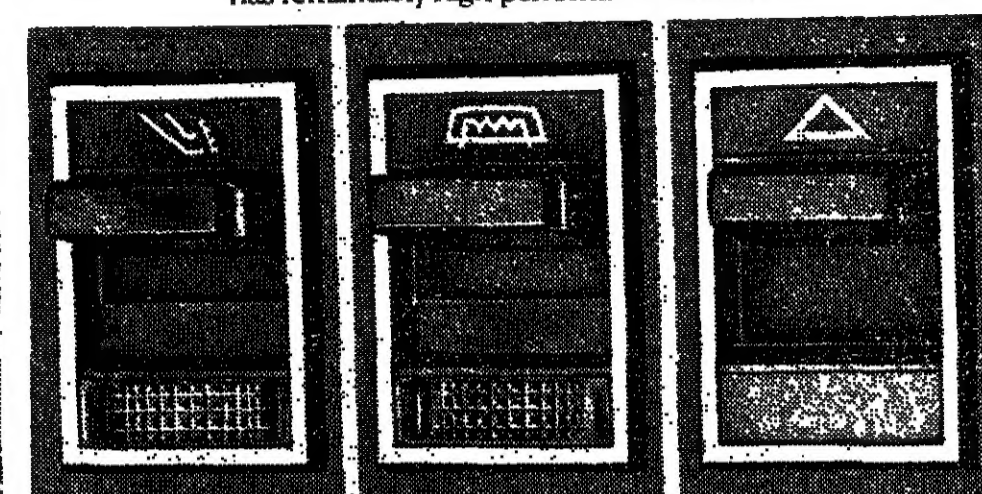
Overseas selling prices
Republic of Ireland: 100 Irish Pounds = 7.88 British Pounds.
Australia: 100 Australian Dollars = 2.01 British Pounds.
Canada: 100 Canadian Dollars = 2.01 British Pounds.
France: 100 French Francs = 6.55 British Pounds.
Germany: 100 German Marks = 3.36 British Pounds.
Italy: 100 Italian Lira = 0.00036 British Pounds.
Japan: 100 Japanese Yen = 0.007 British Pounds.
Netherlands: 100 Dutch Guilders = 0.376 British Pounds.
New Zealand: 100 New Zealand Dollars = 0.69 British Pounds.
Norway: 100 Norwegian Kroner = 0.136 British Pounds.
Portugal: 100 Portuguese Escudos = 0.002 British Pounds.
Spain: 100 Spanish Pesetas = 0.02 British Pounds.
Sweden: 100 Swedish Kronor = 0.136 British Pounds.
Switzerland: 100 Swiss Francs = 0.75 British Pounds.
United States: 100 US Dollars = 0.75 British Pounds.
West Germany: 100 West German Marks = 3.36 British Pounds.
Yugoslavia: 100 Yugoslav Dinars = 0.00036 British Pounds.



A choice of two economical engine sizes. The 4-cylinder 1800 cc and, more geared to performance, the 6-cylinder 2200 cc.

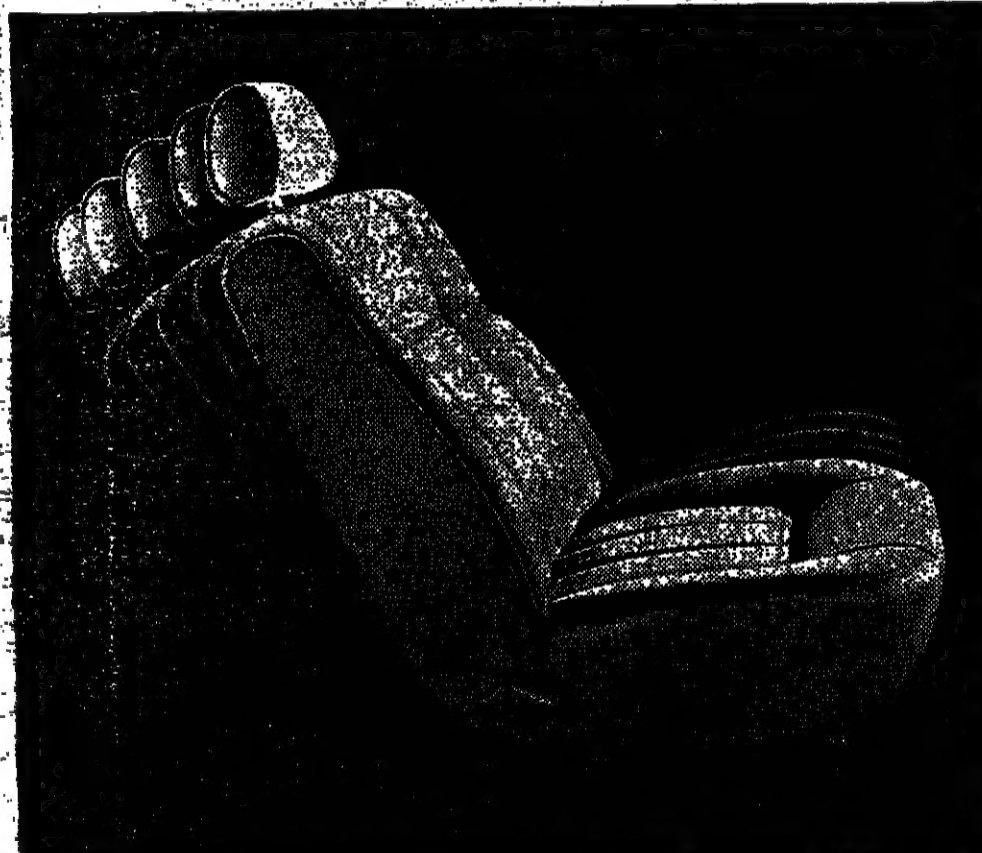


With unique Hydragas® suspension and wide, radial-ply tyres, the car has remarkably high performance standards.

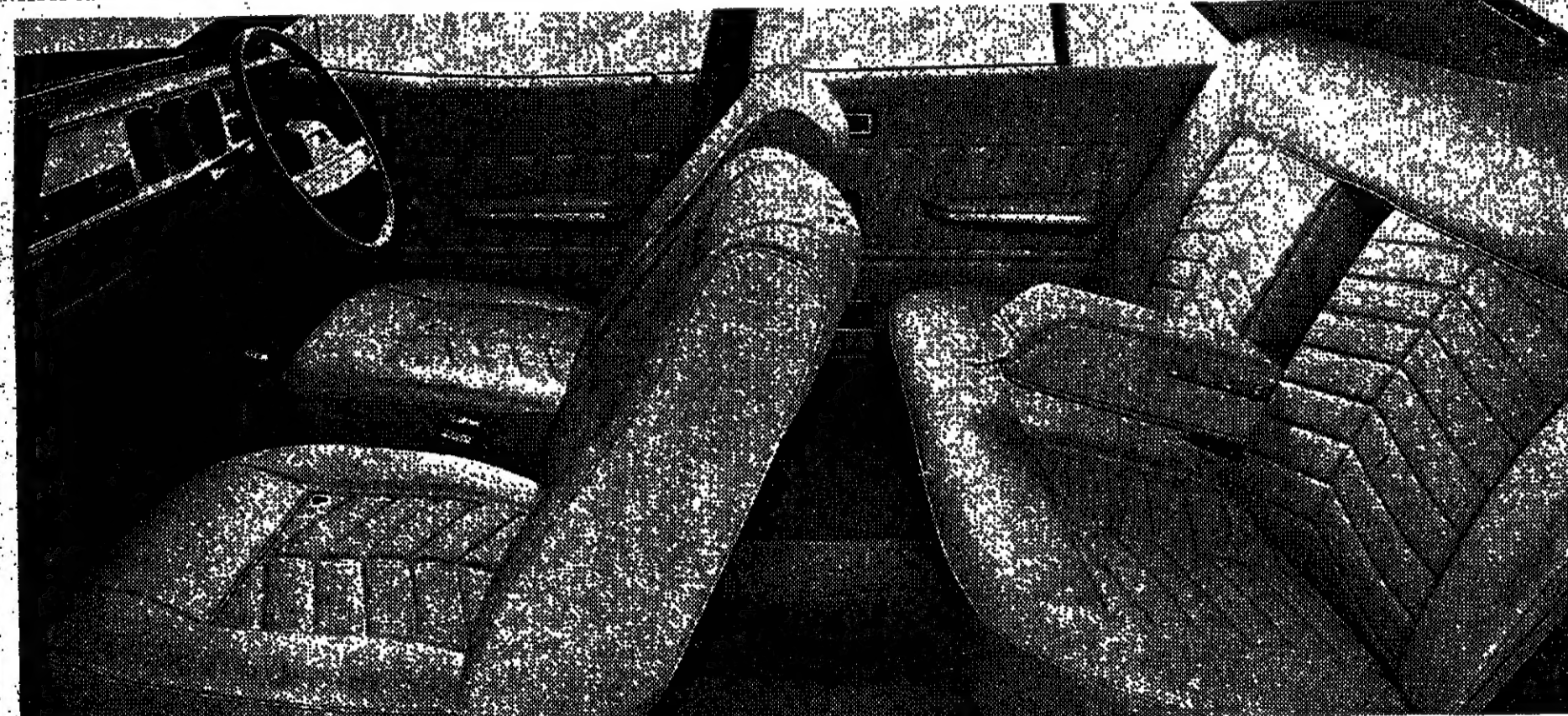


Such features as a brake failure warning light, heated rear window and a hazard warning light all contribute to the car's impressive safety package.

The 18-22 Series is so significant a car that we've made it available in two striking body styles from Austin and Morris. The low profile bonnet and hideaway wipers mean the best possible vision. Front wheel drive and a wide track are features of both models.



An unusual reclining driver's seat which adjusts up and down as well as back and forwards for a safer, more comfortable driving position.*



A spacious interior, soundproofed to luxury car standards, with a fitted carpet and rear armrest.

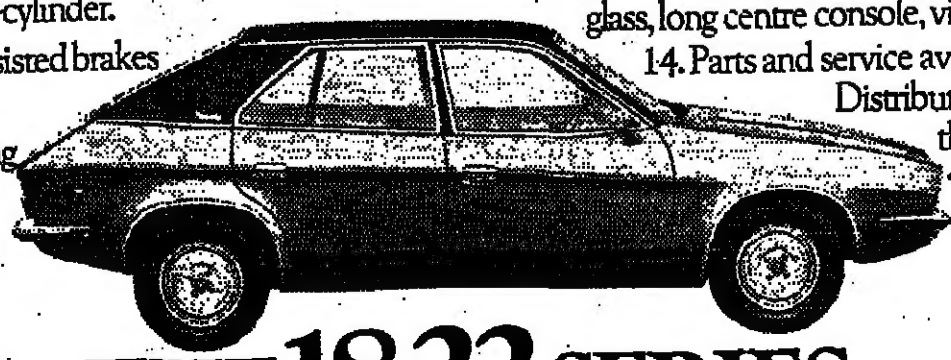
An illustrated guide to the car that's got it all together.

British Leyland's new 18-22 Series is, without doubt, one of the most eye-catching cars on the road. But it's far more than good looks alone that makes this car so special. What does, is the meticulous attention to detail in such areas as performance, comfort and safety. The end result, quite simply, is one of the most exciting new cars in years. So significant is the 18-22 Series that we're making it available in Austin, Morris and Wolseley versions. So why not visit your nearest Austin or Morris showroom and inspect the new car for yourself. There's the 1800 saloon, 1800HL and the 2200HL. Or, if you want to take luxury even further, there's the Wolseley saloon. Just read the following long list of the new car's features

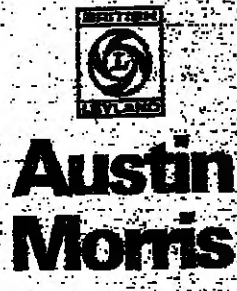
- and we think we know the conclusion you'll come to. That this really is the car that's got it all together.
1. Advanced aerodynamic wedge shape in two different body styles reduces drag, improves m.p.g.
 2. All independent Hydragas® suspension that needs no regular maintenance for the life of the car.
 3. Front wheel drive.
 4. Wide track and wide radial-ply tyres for better road holding.
 5. Choice of two economical engine sizes: OHV 4-cylinder and a performance OHC 6-cylinder.
 6. Dual circuit power-assisted brakes with front discs.
 7. Power-assisted steering on all 6-cylinder models.

8. Reclining driver's seat adjusts up and down as well as back and forward.
9. Three-speed ventilation system includes re-circulation control on low speed, side-window demist and foot level vents.
10. Comprehensive safety package ranging from heated rear window to rigid steel body shell.
11. Soundproofing to luxury car standards.
12. Rust protection includes wax injection of sill members, electro-phoretic paint, under-body protection and front wheel arch liners.
13. Wolseley features as standard push-button radio, tinted glass, long centre console, vinyl roof and carpeted boot.
14. Parts and service available from over 2,500 Distributors and Dealers throughout the country.

*Head restraints optional at extra cost.



THE 18-22 SERIES
The car that's got it all together.



1800 and 2200 cc models shown. 1800HL and 2200HL models shown. 1800HL and 2200HL models shown. 1800HL and 2200HL models shown.

HOME NEWS

Professor proposes moves to strengthen rights of children

From David Leigh

New proposals to strengthen children's rights by giving them more legal representation and independent spokesmen were proposed in Birmingham yesterday by Professor Hugh Bevan, Head of the Department of Law at Hull University.

Juvenile court magistrates ought to be allowed to act as observers on children's behalf when local authorities are considering the cases of young people already in care, Professor Bevan, who has been closely involved in the campaign to get legal representation for children, told the annual conference of the National Children's Bureau.

The provisions in the Children Bill, now before Parliament, for legal representation for children have been much diluted from earlier proposals in Dr David Owen's former private member's Bill.

Professor Bevan criticised the present Bill, which limits the appointment of legal advisers to children to cases under the Children and Young Persons Act where there is conflict between children's interests and parents.

The Bill at present proposes that local authority workers can be appointed to help to advise children. That scheme was "an unreasonable demand on professional loyalty", Professor Bevan said. Nor was it practical with the shortage of social workers.

He urged that every court whose proceedings related to children should have a duty to consider whether the children should have separate representation, even though that was

bound to mean some increase in demands on the legal profession.

For children in care, the proposed powers to allow legal representation should be strengthened and courts should be allowed to direct experienced social workers, independent of the local authority, to brief the children's legal advisers.

When children were in long-term care the local authority reviewed their cases once every six months. Magistrates should be present at the decision-making process. "That is the crucial stage at which the [the child's] interests need safeguarding", Professor Bevan said.

A magistrate could then decide on his own initiative whether the period of care ought to end or not, and what should be investigated on the child's behalf to be presented later to a court.

The magistrate would go far to meet the difficulties of social workers and allow people with expert knowledge, whose services were free, to be used.

Professor Bevan's new proposal is bound to be controversial. Social workers are already highly sensitive to what they feel are increasing public calls for scrutiny of their work.

Dr Owen, Minister of State, Department of Health and Social Security, whose special responsibility is the Children Bill, will address the conference tomorrow.

Bill requires guard dogs to have handlers

A clause that a handler should always be present when a guard dog is used to protect premises was added yesterday to the Dogs Bill during the Commons committee stage. It also specifies that when the dog is not under the direct control of the handlers it shall be chained and unable to roam.

The Bill's sponsor, Mr Peter Doig (Labour MP for Dundee, West), agreed that it was an unnecessary duplication for guard dog owners to register with the police and then obtain a licence from the local authority. The Bill would be amended after consultation.

Early indications were that both the Government and the local authority associations thought local authorities should issue licences rather than the police.

The committee removed a penalty of imprisonment from the Bill. Failure to comply with its provisions will now carry a fine of up to £400. The committee stage was completed.

Mr Doig would go far to meet the difficulties of social workers and allow people with expert knowledge, whose services were free, to be used.

The dog's owner, Mr Leslie Bowkley, licensee of The Lagoon public house, High Street, Tipton, said: "The dog was doing its job. I will have it put down." The boy fell off a wall outside the public house while playing.



Miss Jean Fraser, of Madame Tussaud's, measuring Mrs Thatcher at the Commons for her effigy, which will take its place at the museum later this year.

Mrs Thatcher's plea for elderly

Many old people are suffering because their fires and heating are inefficient or dangerous, Mrs Thatcher, Leader of the Opposition, told the annual meeting of Help the Aged in London yesterday. "Many of them have the kind of fire or heating arrangement which is

not the most efficient and some seem to be even dangerous", she said.

Mrs Thatcher called for efforts to ensure that old people had the most efficient type of heating for their homes. She urged that extra space should be provided in purpose-built homes so that the elderly

tenants could bring in large but treasured furniture, and she praised the recent raising of the earnings limit for pensioners.

Ex-brokers on charge involving £67,000

Three former stockbrokers denied at Bristol Crown Court yesterday an indictment alleging conspiracy, fraud and theft involving more than £67,000 in cash and 27,300 shares and stock units belonging to clients.

They are Bernard Yorke Bartlett, aged 64, of Manor Terrace, Exmouth, Devon; Gordon Chaplin Bradbeer, aged 46, of Heckford Road, Poole, Dorset; and Frederick Herbert Wilshire, aged 35, of Station Road, Nailsea, near Bristol.

An indictment containing 16 charges alleges that "the offences were committed while the defendants were trading as Bartlett and Company in Broad Street and Corn Street, Bristol."

Sir Joseph Molloy, QC, opening the case for the prosecution, said the three were "in court not merely because they had had a business failure but because an investigation disclosed that their state of affairs was brought about by criminal activities."

All three are alleged to have conspired to cheat and defraud customers by inducing them to buy shares in Westfield Minerals Ltd and pleading share documents which their bankers as security for the company.

Mr Bartlett is accused on five charges of fraudulently converting to his own use and that of the company £36,250 in cash and 14,800 shares on the account of Mrs Doreen Alice Peters.

All three deny the charges. Mr Wilshire and Mr Bradbeer face two additional charges of theft, totalling a total of £11,755.

Sir Joseph said that when Mr Bartlett retired he owed £13,000 and that the deed of dissolution of the partnership provided that he would sell certain property, including a yacht, to meet his obligations.

In December, 1970, Bartlett and Company were declared bankrupt on the Bristol Stock Exchange and were liquidated. An official assignee was appointed and began an investigation into the firm's activities. Quite large debts were disclosed and a list of names was later paid to individuals by the Stock Exchange.

The trial continues today.

Crash pilot escapes
The trainee pilot of an RAF Harrier jump-jet escaped with minor injuries yesterday when he ejected from the aircraft before it crashed into a wood at Ashfield, Salop.

Murder in Glasgow
Mrs Jean Findlayson, a Sunday school teacher and mother of two boys, was found murdered in the hallway of her flat in Glenacre Drive, Castle-milk, Glasgow, yesterday.

Tenants claim for effect of inflation

From Our Correspondent

Corby District Council, Northamptonshire, faced with a bill of more than £16,000 after losing a High Court action brought under the Land Compensation Act, is to be sued again for more money because of inflation.

The council lost a case brought by a council tenant last month after the council had pulled down his prefabricated home. The council said that the premises were pulled down because of their age.

The court decided that nearly fifty homes on the town's Lodge Park estate had been demolished to make way for redevelopment, which entitled tenants to payment under the Land Compensation Act. The council is to pay nearly £300 tenants an average of £300 each.

Mr Albert Greer, chairman of the Lodge Park Tenants' Association, said yesterday: "We are not accepting this and have been advised to take the council to court again. We shall be seeking another 20 per cent for interest charges over the three years. We shall also be demanding another 20 per cent to keep pace with inflation, and yet another 20 per cent for the time we have been kept waiting."

Fire safety plan

Councillors are being recommended to spend more than £300,000 on tightening fire precautions at old people's homes in the Nottingham area after the disaster at the Fairfield home, Edwalton, last December, in which 18 died.

Lord Thorneycroft

Lord Thorneycroft, chairman of the Conservative Party, who is in King Edward VII's Hospital, London, with a recurring back complaint, is likely to be there for about two weeks, Conservative Central Office said yesterday.

Students call on state to take over property

From David Hencke
of The Times Higher Education Supplement

A call for a large extension of state control by nationalizing building companies, land banks, finance companies and building societies was approved by the National Union of Students conference at Llandudno yesterday.

The conference passed an executive motion calling for the extension of state control and a vast public building programme.

The NUS is committed to a campaign calling for the municipalization of private landlords; government action against property speculators; and an extension of the rent freeze for private and council tenants.

The motion also called for support for rent strikes and sit-ins in colleges to draw attention to accommodation difficulties.

Two amendments, one calling for the nationalization of 250 top companies representing 87 per cent of British industry, and another calling for a national squatting campaign, were defeated.

A third motion, proposed by St Andrews University Students' Union, calling on students' unions to provide or support housing associations for students, also was defeated.

Mr J. Lloyd, new vice-president (welfare), said the motion was "a comprehensive statement of housing policy adopted by the NUS. He said more state control was essential to provide adequate housing."

The NUS has called on the Government to withdraw its proposed voluntary registration scheme for student tenants. The scheme will mean that students

who volunteer to register their lettings will lose security of tenure under the 1974 Rent Act.

Mr John Randall, retiring president of the NUS, said: "The Government has made great play that the scheme is voluntary. Let us tell the Government that we intend to do without it."

He pledged that he would campaign to boycott the scheme if it is introduced in the next academic year.

Vice-chancellors who use "bully boys" to intimidate students were warned by Mr Charles Clarke, the new NUS president that they will face far more militant action in their campuses.

The whole system of education is running into decline", he said. The vice-chancellors had decided to "fight back and intimidate students."

He referred to Lancaster University's decision to bring in the police to remove students occupying buildings last year, and said that universities would find that their hard line approach would be countered by students.

Mr Graham Mather, aged 20, chairman of the Monday Club Universities Group and its sole delegate, issued a statement attacking NUS encouragement of disruption at Lancaster University. He said that it was the one place where "the university authorities are at long last taking disciplinary action against students who occupied the administrative offices on the filiest of pretence."

Mr Francis Hayden, the Liberal contender for the presidency, who came third in Tuesday's election, won a seat on the NUS executive yesterday. He is believed to be the first Liberal to do so for nearly 10 years.

Transport planning for the people 'brings benefits'

From Michael Bailly
Transport Correspondent

Nottingham

Transport planning designed for people at the expense of the car has provided worthwhile benefits for Nottingham, according to Mr Brian Collins, director of planning and transport for Nottinghamshire County Council.

"Transport planning has for too long been planning for vehicles," he told the Chartered Institute of Transport's congress on transport and the environment. "This is no longer acceptable. It has to be planning for people."

Bus traffic in Nottingham has risen sharply in three years with no increase in vandalism or staff difficulties. On the contrary, there is a waiting list of prospective drivers for the city's enlarged bus fleet.

Shops and businesses, which at first opposed the scheme, fearing loss of trade and even bankruptcy as a result of forced measures against the car,

are now broadly behind it, Mr Collins said.

The 450,000 inhabitants are now nearly all in favour, he said.

In the last three years, Nottingham has banned through cars and lorries and eliminated street parking in the city centre, at the same time expanding its bus fleet to run free circular services in the centre and cheap park-and-ride services from the suburbs.

The most radical step is due in four months: a controversial scheme to control traffic movement in a large part of the city. An area with thirty thousand inhabitants will have many side roads sealed and others confined to bus and pedestrian access.

Car traffic will be cut by up to a quarter to speed buses and other essential traffic into the centre.

Nottingham is not against the car or against road building. Mr Collins emphasized. About half the planned transport budget of £45m at 1972 prices will go on roads, the rest on public transport.

EEC REFERENDUM

Guideline 'contempt' claim rejected by the Speaker

By Our Political Staff

Mr Wilson and the Cabinet majority were spared embarrassment yesterday when the Speaker ruled that the Cabinet guidelines for the conduct of ministers during the referendum campaign did not justify a prima facie reference to the House of Commons.

But Mr Michael English, Labour MP for Nottingham, West, who raised the point on Tuesday, showed that he had not exhausted his procedural ingenuity. Accepting the Speaker's ruling, he said there were other possibilities open.

He suggested that the guidelines would forbid pro-EEC and anti-EEC ministers to appear on the same platform at the Labour Party's special referendum conference on April 25.

In other words, Mr Wilson and Mr Callaghan could not take on Mr Foot, the Secretary of State for Employment. No doubt the question of whether to have a referendum would have to be considered that.

Mr English had in mind the passage requiring ministers

"not to allow themselves to appear in direct confrontation, on the same platform or programme, with another minister who takes a different view of the Government's recommendation."

In his ruling, the Speaker said that, in general, arrangements made within political parties in the House would be unlikely to raise questions of contempt or privilege.

On her return from Washington yesterday, Mrs Castle, Secretary of State for Social Services, one of the seven Cabinet ministers dissenting from the renegotiation White Paper, recovered from the implications of some informal replies she gave to a reporter at Heathrow.

She said she had not joined any revolt and had made clear that as a Cabinet minister she supported the Cabinet's decision that dissenting ministers should not participate in this week's debate on the EEC White Paper. It remained her position that she would speak against entry into the Community.

Leading article, page 17

Farm union plea for fair play

By a Staff Reporter

Britain's membership of the EEC has paid "hands-down" for the housewife so far, Sir Henry Plumb, president of the National Farmers' Union, said yesterday. But it was a different story for the farmer.

He urged the Government to "play fairly with producers as well as with consumers" and gave a warning that "policies of squeezing the farmer" on prices could rebound.

Sir Henry told a conference of the Yorkshire Cattle Society at Awre, where the EEC system, which provided subsidies on imports and levies on exports, plus the Community's beef and butter subsidies and payments made for the import of sugar, were worth £110m a year to British housewives.

He said that Mr Wilson had seemed to "congratulate" Mr Peart, the Minister of Agriculture, last month for keeping community farm price increases below cost of production, and thus, in real terms, reinforcing the downward trend in common agricultural policy prices.

"Far from proving his [the Prime Minister's] claim that this would benefit consumers and taxpayers, I believe that the Government's day such policies will reverberate through their perpetrators," Sir Henry said.

"They will then wonder why meat and egg and grain prices suddenly soar in response to relatively small cutbacks in production brought about by their policies of squeezing the farmer."

Mr Heath swings at Mr Wilson

Continued from page 1

doctrines in which it has all too often drifted during the past two days of debate on the EEC.

As the benches filled up on both sides of the House for Mr Heath's first parliamentary speech since he lost the party leadership, he reminded MPs that the political purpose of the Community had been to absorb the new Germany into the structure of the European family.

The power of Germany now was immense, yet most Germans desperately wanted a framework in which they could work and be contained.

But the speech also wanted a balanced Community. They had long wanted Britain as part of that balance and had been prepared to make sacrifices to that end.

In spite of his concentration on the speech, Mr Heath was unable to refrain from a swing at the Prime Minister. He did not think that Mr Wilson's late conversion was particularly honourable, he said; it was strange that ministers should be allowed to say one thing in the House but be instructed to deliver words in which they did not believe when they stood at the dispatch box.

From the other end of the House, Mr P. J. Fowell, United Unionist MP for Down, South, made clear to the House that whatever the result of the referendum, it would not, for him, be the end of the battle to withdraw Britain from the Community.

Parliamentary report, page 10

GB 75 founder backs new trade union movement

By Stewart Tendler

A group of trade unionists, yesterday launched the Movement for True Industrial Democracy (Truind), which is dedicated to fighting class-war extremism in the unions and is backed by Colonel David Stirling, organizer of the defunct GB 75 movement. At a press conference the officers of Truind explained the reasons for the new movement.

Colonel Stirling and his emergent Better Britain Society as their first successful conversion.

Mr Sidney Davies, a convenor of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers in Birmingham, said they sought out Colonel Stirling "because he put the fear of GB 75 into us with the idea of GB 75, and we told him he was making the greatest possible error."

Colonel Stirling wrote a foreword to *The Day of the Outrider*, a pamphlet being put out by Truind and the Better Britain Society.

Mr Ronald McLaughlin, acting secretary of Truind, said the presence of Colonel Stirling and other members of the Better Britain Society yesterday, Colonel Stirling advocates support for Truind in his letter to members of GB 75, as reported in *The Times* on Monday. He has also issued a précis of the objectives of his new Better Britain Society, and promises 22 papers to elucidate the philosophy, the logic and the arguments of the society. The society has moved from the concepts of GB 75, which were about dealing with a possible general strike.

create new rules for unions and their relations with industry, and then campaign to get them accepted by the TUC and the GB 75 movement would also like to achieve greater prosperity and a European standing for its ideals.

It was explained yesterday that Truind would be a ginger group within the trade union movement, trying to fight extremism by encouraging active participation by union members in union affairs. The four organizers said they were all socialists. Mr John Fraser, a member of the national executive council of the National and Local Government Officers' Association, said: "It is not a movement of the right. Extremists are just as dangerous to socialists as the rest of society."

Despite those ideals the questioning invariably comes back to the connexion with Colonel Stirling.

Truind members said they had many sympathizers in Britain. Non-union people can join as affiliated members and that explained the presence of Colonel Stirling and other members of the Better Britain Society yesterday. Colonel Stirling advocates support for Truind in his letter to members of GB 75, as reported in *The Times* on Monday. He has also issued a précis of the objectives of his new Better Britain Society, and promises 22 papers to elucidate the philosophy, the logic and the arguments of the society. The society has moved from the concepts of GB 75, which were about dealing with a possible general strike.

The aim of Truind is explained in the last chapter of the booklet, under the heading of "The Counterforce". It suggests that Truind should

create new rules for unions and their relations with industry, and then campaign to get them accepted by the TUC and the GB 75 movement would also like to achieve greater prosperity and a European standing for its ideals.

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Scotland to lose bailies after 500 years

Scotland is to lose its bailies after nearly 500 years. With the reorganization of local government, the office of bailie, a lay magistrate appointed by a Scottish town council, will disappear.

The title of "bailie", which dates back to the late fifteenth century, may be retained as an honorary title by some local authorities, but officially it will vanish on May 15.

Between 800 and 900 people at present serving as provosts, bailies and police judges in the Scottish boroughs will become justices of the peace when the new district courts are set up on May 15.

Manchester airport dispute over

From John Charrles

Manchester

Manchester international airport resumed normal operations yesterday afternoon after a grudgingly worded agreement between 400 ground workers who have been staging lightning strikes over the past three weeks and the airport authority.

The strikers, including baggage-handlers, porters and firemen, are seeking a £220 a week rise above an existing nationally agreed settlement because of increased work at the airport, where a multi-million pound expansion project has just been completed.

They agreed to return to work just after midday and gave a guarantee that there would be no more industrial action in pursuit of their claim until the end of this year, when the current national agreement expires.

Crash blocks M1

The M1 was blocked in both directions for two hours at Watford yesterday after a French heavy lorry had overturned near the Watford-Aylesbury turn-off, seriously injuring two people.

Nurses vote on strike

Nurses at Derby's largest mental hospital, who say that staff shortages are endangering the lives of patients and staff, yesterday decided to hold a secret ballot on whether to strike.

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EEC REFERENDUM

Liberals seek poll day holiday and adjournment of Parliament for campaigning

By George Clark

Political Correspondent

The day on which the referendum on Britain's continued membership of the EEC is held should be a public holiday. That is proposed in one of the amendments to the Referendum Bill, which the Liberal Party yesterday announced it was seeking popular support.

When Mr. Short, Lord President of the Council, moves the second reading of the Bill in the Commons today, he is expected to announce that the date will be Thursday, June 5.

The Liberals are also proposing that both Houses should adjourn for 21 days before Referendum Day.

They argue that if people are to be properly informed of the issues and encouraged to use their vote, MPs must be freed from Parliamentary attendance so that they can campaign under their respective banners.

Mr. Thorpe, the Liberal leader, has always insisted that the referendum result, while it may be accepted by the Labour Party as being binding on the Government, cannot overrule Parliament.

It is to emphasize the role of Parliament that the Liberals have tabled an amendment to change the wording of the question on the ballot paper.

Bearing in mind the expected result of the vote on the White Paper setting out the revised terms, the Liberals propose that the introduction to the question should not be: "The Government has announced the results of the renegotiation of the United Kingdom's terms of membership of the European Community."

Instead, they propose that the preamble should read: "Parliament has approved the results of the Government's renegotiation." They also want to delete the words "The Common Market" which have been added after the question. "Do you think that the United Kingdom should stay in the European Community?"

The Liberals think that Referendum Day should be a public holiday so that as many people as possible will have the chance to vote. They also pro-

pose attending the vote to people on holiday and those living or working abroad.

In line with earlier declarations, the Liberals have put down a long amendment to enable the vote to be counted and announced on a constituency basis.

Mr. Cledwyn Hughes, chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party, and Dr. J. Dickson Mather, MP for Greenock and Port Glasgow, supported by other Labour MPs, will propose that the grant for public funds to the two umbrella organizations, Britain in Europe and the National Referendum Campaign, for expenses should be increased from £125,000 each to £250,000 each. Another amendment seeks £500,000 for each group.

With backing from other MPs who believe that many people will want to reject the referendum idea, Mr. Michael Latham, Conservative MP for Macclesfield, proposes that question should be provided on the paper for voters to mark either "don't know" or "believe that this decision should be left to Parliament."

Other Conservatives who wish to press action as the Government's tactics suggest that the Act should in future be cited as "The Abrogation of Parliamentary Sovereignty Act."

Mr. Ian Gow (Eastbourne, C) and Mr. J. R. Knapman (Leeds) will move a new clause stating that nothing in the Act shall affect the right of MPs including ministers, to speak and vote on the question of EEC membership.

Mr. Latham also wants the Act to state that the referendum will be null and void if fewer than half of those legally qualified to vote actually do so, or, in the event of a majority "no" vote, if the number making up the majority is less than two-thirds of those actually voting.

This is the first attempt to try to define the kind of voting totals that should be regarded as acceptable.

Mr. Gow and Mr. Michael Marshall (Arun, C) propose a second question after the "Yes/No" declaration. It is: "Notwithstanding your answer to No 1, are you willing

to leave the ultimate decision to this matter to Parliament?"

Arrangements have not yet been completed for the allocation of broadcasting time to the two umbrella organizations, but apparently it has already been decided that there shall be no party political broadcasts during the period. The Scottish nationalists are now trying to arrange one before the campaign begins.

The Scottish nationalists, who are staging anti-EEC rallies, are associated with the National Referendum Campaign in Scotland and would be able to negotiate for a share in the official broadcasts there.

They are using the slogan: "Scotland—European Nation or EEC Province?" and are emphasizing that Scotland should be able to determine her own relations with Europe.

The party is also suggesting that Scotland will soon be a massive net exporter of oil and it fears that a weak United Kingdom government might "sacrifice some of the benefits which we might expect."

Mr. Roy Douglas, chairman of the Liberal "No to Common Market" Campaign, said yesterday that public opinion polls showed consistently that most Liberals with definite views on the subject opposed Britain's continued membership. It was therefore inappropriate that the official leaders, who held a different view, should be invited to speak for the party to the exclusion of the others.

However, Mr. David Steel, the Liberal Chief Whip, rejected the claim in campaigning for continued membership, the parliamentary party and the party executive were acting in accordance with assembly decisions, he said.

Mr. Einar Forde, a Norwegian Labour MP who took a prominent part in his country's referendum campaign two years ago, will address anti-EEC rallies being organized by the Tribune group in London, Manchester, Cardiff and Glasgow in the next few days. Mr. Wedgwood Benn, Mr. Foot, Mr. Shore, Mrs. Castle, Mr. Heffer, Mr. Orme and Mrs. Hart will also take part.

Leading article, page 17

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Rejection of Shore trade claim

From Bernard Withers

Luxembourg

Mr. Olaf Gundlach, EEC commissioner with responsibility for the internal market, defended himself yesterday against criticism by Mr. Shore, Secretary of State for Trade, over his conclusion that trade figures do not show that membership has been disadvantageous to Britain.

Mr. Shore described the commissioner's conclusion as false on the ground that he failed to distinguish between total trade (including oil trade and non-oil trade, and so disguised the fact that the deterioration in Britain's balance on goods other than oil had mainly occurred in trade with the EEC.

Mr. Gundlach told the European Parliament in Luxembourg that Mr. Shore's criticism was self-contradictory because most people who had taken part in the discussion, whatever their stand on the broader European issue, favoured free European trade.

Oil price increases were not an accidental phenomenon that could be eliminated by subtracting oil from the trade figures. They had dramatically influenced the world economy, and some of the biggest items on Britain's import bill from her EEC partners, such as chemicals and plastic products, were influenced by them.

Farmers' unions attempt to end egg dispute

By a Staff Reporter

Leaders of British and French farmers' unions met in London yesterday in an attempt to end the dispute over imports of cheap French eggs into Britain.

The National Farmers' Union and the Fédération Nationale des Syndicats d'Exploitation Agricole (FNSEA) agreed to submit joint proposals to the Comité des Organisations Professionnelles Agricoles des Communautés, which represents farmers' unions in all EEC countries, at its meeting in Brussels this month.

Europe keeps an eye on British kipper

From Pearce Wright

Science Correspondent, York

The fate of the British kipper depends on delicate negotiations between experts of a new EEC scientific committee on food trying to harmonize the safety standards of preservatives, colouring and flavouring.

The kipper presents a particular difficulty because the artificial preservatives giving it a rich brown colour are not on the list of approved additives of other countries. Even the scientists call the substance BPC or "brown-for-kippers" because it is such a complicated mixture of chemical agents.

The case of the kipper was discussed yesterday at the annual Chemical Congress in York by Professor E. C. E. Weedon, of Queen Mary College, London. He is chairman of the Ministry of Agriculture's Food Additives and Contaminants Committee and one of two British members of the new EEC committee.

Chemistry and health. Professor Weedon used the kipper, brown substance as an example of the dozens of compounds over which there will be prolonged negotiations in the coming months.

On the additives in general, he said: "Many people are concerned about developments in food, and some are asking if we are being slowly poisoned." He believed their anxiety was understandable.

Describing the United Kingdom organization that makes safety checks, he said: "We are now able to test for all sorts of things in a way that would have been impossible a few years ago. The public believes rightly that all additives should be tested."

"For new products it has become very expensive to carry out the tests of any compound if we are to have any hope of all our getting it properly checked."

Professor Weedon said many manufacturers complained that there was no safety margin

Support for Mr Heffer is likely from Scots TUC

By Our Labour Staff

Support for Mr. Heffer and other ministers defying the Cabinet over the EEC referendum is expected to come from the Scottish TUC at its annual meeting in Aberdeen next week.

A compromise motion to be moved by the Transport and General Workers' Union and seconded by the National Union of Mineworkers Scottish area congresses. MPs and ministers who adhere to and campaign for the policy as determined by the Labour Party conference.

Strong support for the motion is expected from the three hundred delegates, representing unions and trades councils throughout Scotland. While welcoming the decision to hold a referendum, it opposes Britain's membership of the EEC and rejects any policy of renegotiation.

The Scottish TUC will be asked to lead a coordinated campaign, including leaflets and demonstrations, putting forward a detailed case for British withdrawal, and the motion urges the entire trade union movement to campaign so that, as a result of the referendum, the Government will be instructed to end British membership.

The conference will hear calls for further big defiances with the money diverted to housing, health and education; concern at the lack of safety regulations and the high casualty rate in North Sea oil operations; and another strongly worded motion from the NUDM Scottish area body opposing any wage freeze or interference in free collective bargaining.

Danes favour continued British membership

From Our Correspondent

Copenhagen

The main short-term aim of Danish policy in the EEC is to assure continued British membership, Mr. Ivar Noergaard, Danish Minister for Europe, said yesterday in an interview in Europe.

The magazine issued by the EEC Commission's office in Denmark. "We are among the most enthusiastic supporters of the British renegotiation terms, even though they go against purely Danish interests," Mr. Noergaard said.

Denmark's longer-term aim was to help to make the Community more active in economic and monetary cooperation, energy and environmental protection, and the treatment of multinational companies.

Denmark would also have a

referendum on Community membership if Britain left, since British membership was a condition in the referendum on membership there in 1972. But that would not come until Britain's new status was known "in the event that the British electorate, against expectations, should choose to leave the Community."

Although Mr. Noergaard hoped that Britain, if she left, would get agreements as favourable as those obtained by both Norway and Sweden, he said that it was impossible to ignore the danger that withdrawal would cause so much bitterness within the Community that its free trade agreements for industrial products with EFTA countries would be called in for renegotiation to provide less favourable terms.

Tory campaign

Mrs. Thatcher will officially open the Conservative Group for Europe's campaign at a meeting for members of both Houses in London next Wednesday at which Mr. Heath, president of the group, will preside.

Union gives £500

The National Society of Operative Printers, Graphical and Media Personnel, which opposes Britain's staying in the EEC, is to give an initial £500 to the Get Britain Out Campaign and call on its branches to support the same cause.

WEST EUROPE

Tricolour flies again in Algiers for visit by M Giscard

From Charles Hargrove
Algiers, April 9
Long the highway from the south to the centre of Algiers and all the streets through which President Giscard d'Estaing will drive in procession on his three-day visit which begins tomorrow. The tricolour has appeared along the white and green flag of the National Liberation Front since Algeria became independent in 1962 serves to underline the truly historic significance of this occasion.

The term is often abused nowadays, but in this context it is apt. It is only necessary to recall what a traumatic experience the Algerian war was for both peoples to appreciate that it is comparable in psychological and political terms to the Brandt's pilgrimage to Warsaw a few years ago.

At Le Monde points out, it required a certain courage and real political will to make the visit possible in view of the fact that some of the wounds that cruel war are still only partially healed on both sides of the Mediterranean.

There was talk first of general de Gaulle and then of President Pompidou coming here, but it was too soon. Now the time is ripe to close one chapter of Franco-Algerian relations definitively, and to open another free from lingering recriminations and resentment, even though the weight of the past 150 years can never be completely forgotten.

Both President Giscard and resident Boumediene want to make this visit the first by a European head of state since independence, a complete success. The Algerian leader has described it as an "extraordinary event comparable to no other". As for the French president, it is fitting that his first official journey abroad since his election last May should be to Algeria.

France is almost as important to the independent Algeria of

today as it was to the former colony. It is Algeria's foremost client and first supplier of goods of every kind, including substantial and increasing amounts of food, owing to the failure—admitted privately by Algerians themselves—of socialism in agriculture. There are nearly 500,000 Algerians working in France and each year they remit some 5,000m francs (about £20m) to their families—an important contribution to the country's foreign exchange reserves.

For France this visit is important if only because it cannot have a Mediterranean policy worth its name, and hope to exert any influence in the area, if its relations with Algeria are bad. In spite of a good deal of socialist "froth", Algeria, thanks to President Boumediene, is regarded in Paris as one of the more reliable and solid countries of the Arab world.

That is why the French President will not allow either the protests or the demands for full compensation of the former French settlers which preceded his visit to mar it. The Algerian Government is in any case showing a more conciliatory approach to such vexed issues.

The two leaders have never met before. If they get on well, it will have a positive effect on all the questions they or their ministers tackle now or later. On a bilateral plane there is the Algerian desire for more French oil imports to offset a substantial trade deficit with France, or for loans and technical assistance to ensure the success of the ambitious second four-year industrialization plan.

On an international scale, Algeria wants France to support its demand for a global long-term agreement with the EEC, and to bring pressure to bear on the United States to extend the scope of the international energy conference to raw materials, with which the French Government basically agrees.

Portuguese Socialists put emphasis on liberty

From Nicholas Ashford
Lisbon, April 9

Freedom, socialism, national independence. These are the main aims of the Portuguese Socialist Party during the present election campaign.

"For us freedom is not something abstract. It is concrete," Dr Mario Soares, the party's leader, said today in an interview with The Times. "We want political freedom, freedom for trade unions, religious freedom and freedom of expression and thought. We want to construct socialism with a human face in Portugal."

During a discussion in his office in the National Assembly, Dr Soares, who is a minister without portfolio in the provisional government, talked about his party's prospects in the coming elections, about the role of the armed forces in political life and about the growing influence of the Communist Party.

He looked remarkably relaxed despite the huge workload he has taken on since returning from exile in Paris two days after the April 25 revolution. As the country's Foreign Minister (until two weeks ago) he visited scores of countries and was responsible for ending Portugal's years of diplomatic isolation. As leader of the Socialist Party he has helped build up party membership from 2,000 to over 75,000.

For the past week he has been stomping round the business. He is one of the few Portuguese leaders who is universally recognized and is appearing at as many meetings as possible.

Dr Soares said his party wanted to put Portugal on the road to socialism "with a human face" but also with prudence. He wanted the recent nationalization of banks and insurance companies to be followed by agrarian reform, but he pointed out that nationalisation did not automatically lead to socialism. "We must be careful not to establish state capitalism," he said.

The need for prudence was largely dictated by Portugal's geographical and strategic position. Portugal was a European country. A million of its people worked in France and Germany, and its economy was dependent on other European economies.

Portugal had to defend its national independence, but without severing traditional alliances. "It would not be realistic to leave NATO," he said. In his view there was no contradiction between Portugal's overtures to be Third World and the Communist block and its policy towards Europe.



Dr Mario Soares: "Socialism with a human face."

Asked about a remark by Senator Alvaro Cunhal, the Communist Party leader, that there was no place for Western-style democracy in Portugal, Dr Soares replied: "I only know of one type of democracy. Either there is democracy or there is not. That is to say we want political democracy which respects both human rights and basic freedoms."

Dr Soares acknowledged that the Communist Party had expanded its influence considerably since the April 25 revolution last year. Communists now held positions at all levels in the machinery of state, and dominated certain trade unions and the information media. "If you transform the media into a vehicle for one party, pluralist democracy can no longer function."

However, he felt that if genuinely free elections were held, the power of the Communist Party would be reduced. The Portuguese people did not want to be led towards a Communist system. "I think the Armed Forces Movement (MFA) is perfectly aware of this and does not want it either."

Dr Soares thought that the forthcoming elections were of the utmost importance despite the creation of the military Supreme Revolutionary Council with almost total powers.

Whatever the results of the elections, however, power will remain in the hands of the MFA. For the next three to five years, "We regard the MFA both as the guarantor and the driving force of democracy in Portugal," Dr Soares said.

Dr Soares admitted that it might be difficult for someone accustomed to British-style parliamentary democracy to understand the Portuguese system. "But unfortunately we have not had democracy here for half a century."

Dr Soares said the way ahead would be difficult. But the Portuguese were creating a "completely original experience" and this required the patience not only of Portugal but of the whole world.

Paris police who killed man in error arrested

From Richard Wigg
Paris, April 9

M Poniatowski, the Minister of the Interior, already facing criticism for suspending the prefect of the Sarthe, today ordered an investigation into the fatal shooting in Paris yesterday of a commercial traveller who innocently drove into a police trap set to capture petty blackmailers.

Three members of the Versailles plainclothes police were placed under immediate arrest last night after the body of M Lucien Bouvier, the commercial traveller, who was 26, had been found with four bullet wounds in his head and stomach and the small car he was driving riddled with gunshots.

The shooting has produced another upsurge of great criticism against the "quick draw" police methods ordered by the Minister of the Interior. France Soir on its front page asked tonight how it could be correct for the police to have shot at M Bouvier for allegedly driving his car through a police barrier when no uniformed policeman was guarding it?

The arrested policemen maintain that they suspected the man, who was doing his business rounds, of being an accomplice of the blackmailers, who yesterday managed to escape. The police used their weapons so rapidly that bystanders said they thought they heard machinegun fire.

The police had set the trap to get the blackmailers at the moment they were to receive the equivalent of £2,000 in false notes from their victims.

The Cabinet today discussed M Poniatowski's handling of the shooting. M Guyon, Minister of the Interior, decided to appoint a successor immediately, leaving M Gandouin who enjoys considerable esteem among the Gaullists, suspended on full pay.

War criminal's pension appeal

Utrecht, April 9.—Josef Kotsalla, one of three German war criminals imprisoned in the Netherlands, has appealed to the highest administrative court for a Dutch old-age pension, a court spokesman said today.

Kotsalla, who is 66, was sentenced to death in 1948 as director of the Amersfoort concentration camp. His sentence was commuted to life imprisonment in 1951. He is serving it in Becht.—AP

Censure motion shows up division of French left

From Our Own Correspondent
Paris, April 9

The Communist Party used the National Assembly today to mount an attack on the Government's handling of the downward trend in the economy and the unemployment problem. But the censure motion, to be voted on late tonight after a reply from M Chirac, the Prime Minister, is also part of the Communist's skilful campaign against their Socialist allies.

The Socialists, aware that the Opposition lack a good 50 votes to put the Government in a minority, were reluctant co-signatories. But they could not refuse without helping the Communist propaganda line that the Socialists are only lukewarm defenders of workers' class interests and already falling for the reformist blandishments of President Giscard d'Estaing.

The censure motion revealed the continuing divisions of the Opposition. M Georges Marchais, the Communist leader, preferring to appear on television before today's debate, attacked the Socialists saying that the Communists' aim now was to "constrain" their allies to keep to their promises under the "common programme" of the left.

Giving a new version of why the Communists have become so combative towards the Socialists, M Marchais said that a strong defence of workers' interests was necessary because "whenever the Socialists have been able to dispense with the support of the Communists they have not hesitated to do so and then gone and applied policies which were anything but left-wing."

The timing of the Communist's attack is good, however. It comes before M Jacques Foccart, the Economics Minister, has decided upon inflationary measures sufficient in scale to satisfy the industrialists. A survey by the National Statistics Institute of more than 200 companies at the end of March found them with order books at their lowest yet. Unemployment is officially near the 800,000 mark.

The Communists' offensive against the Government now also includes big public protest meetings in France, Belgium and the Netherlands on Monday night and in Paris tonight—which the Socialists have also felt obliged to join.

From Our Own Correspondent
Brussels, April 9

Contrary to popular belief, the British social security system is not among the most generous in the European Community.

According to figures published by the European Commission in Brussels today, the British are worse off on virtually all counts than their counterparts in other member states, with the exception of the Irish. However, the statistics fail to take into account more generous medical benefits in Britain and the more comprehensive nature of the British scheme.

The figures, produced in response to a written question from Lord O'Hagan, an independent British member of the European Parliament, show that Britain spends only 17.1 per cent of its gross national product on social security compared with 22.4 per cent in Italy, 22.1 per cent in West Germany and 18.7 per cent in France. Ireland lags with 13.4 per cent.

British state pensions are also lower than in most other member states. A single person with 40 years' contributions receives a pension equivalent to about 30 per cent of his earlier annual earnings in Britain, compared with up to 80 per cent in Italy, 60 per cent in West Germany and 50 per cent in France. The pattern is similar for unemployment benefits, sickness insurance, family allowances and paid holidays. For example, the monthly family allowance for wage earners with three children, as a percentage of average earnings, is only 5.69 per cent in Britain compared with 30.16 per cent in France, 18.15 per cent in Belgium and 15.94 per cent in the Netherlands.

The Commission says comments that over the whole range of social benefits no system can claim to be the most generous in Europe. The British Government would doubtless argue that its system covers more individuals than most of the schemes offered by other member states. In addition, it would point out that social security contributions by employees and their employers are considerably lower in Britain. Predictably the Commission says that British membership of the Community involves no reduction in the standards and levels of payment of the British social security system. Indeed, although the Commission does not make the point, it could be argued that any harmonization of national social security systems towards a single European scheme is likely to mean improvements in Britain as all member states move closer towards the highest common denominator.

Social security systems compared, page 18

OVERSEAS

Amnesty finds that both Israel and Syria ill-treated prisoners

By Martin Huckerby

Both Israel and Syria were guilty of ill-treating prisoners taken during the 1973 war, according to Amnesty International in a report published today.

The Amnesty commission investigating allegations that prisoners were tortured was unable to establish absolute proof of torture. But it believed that medical findings and the consistency of testimony left little doubt that at least some of the alleged abuses had been committed by both sides.

Mr Martin Ennals, secretary-general of Amnesty International, said in the report that the abuses perpetrated against Israelis held in Syria appeared to have been generally of a more severe nature.

The report quotes statements by former prisoners from both countries.

An Israeli captain, Gabriel Gerson, said he had been captured, unharmed and taken to a base in Damascus where he was beaten and kicked until unconscious. His interrogators tortured him with electricity and by beating the soles of his feet.

After lacerating his feet, they started beating his legs. His wounds were left uncleaned and one leg swelled up and smelled like a dead animal," he said. Later he was taken to hospital and told that the gangrene in his leg necessitated amputation. Even after losing his leg, the beatings continued.

A Syrian civilian, Jassim Hassan Rikab, said he had been interrogated by police in Israel who beat him with their fists and then burnt him with cigarettes. When an Israeli doctor saw the burns he became very angry and shouted at the policeman.

The commission's medical report stated that the scars on the man's body were very specific for cigarette burns.

The commission, which was composed of a Dutch doctor, a Swedish lawyer, and the Norwegian director of the International Peace Research Institute in Oslo, interviewed 25 Israelis and 21 Syrians who had been prisoners of war, as well as three Syrian civilians who said they had been kidnapped by the Israeli forces.

The report emphasises the importance of learning from the mistakes of the past in order to prevent similar abuses occurring in the future. It recommends both governments to take a series of measures to ensure the full implementation of the third Geneva Convention concerning the treatment of prisoners of war.

Report of Amnesty International Mission to Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic to Investigate Allegations of Ill-Treatment and Torture. (Amnesty International, 53, Tavistock Road, London WC1, 50p.)

Jewish trade controller on £6m charge refused bail

From Our Own Correspondent
Jerusalem, April 9

An appeal for bail by Mr Michael Trur, former head of the Israel Corporation which controls some of the country's leading industries, was refused by the Tel Aviv District Court today.

Mr Trur, who is 52, is to stand trial on 18 charges of theft, fraud, embezzlement and bribe taking. He is also accused of breach of trust as a public servant, the Government being a partner in the Israel Corporation.

The prosecution claimed that he might attempt to influence witnesses or alter documents if set free. Mr Trur has been in custody for seven weeks. His arrest followed public criticism alleging Government inaction over heavy losses of funds by the corporation, disclosed last year. It was found that large sums had been transferred to the International Credit Bank of Geneva.

The bank is controlled by Dr Tibor Rosenbaum, a leading fund raiser for Israel and former treasurer of the World Jewish Congress. Dr Rosenbaum's bank was forced to suspend operations last summer because of liquidity difficulties.

In December an inquiry commission was set up to check on the unauthorized transfer of more than £5m from the Israel Corporation and two of its associate companies, Zim shipping lines and the Haifa Oil Refineries, to trust companies run by Dr Rosenbaum in Vaduz, Liechtenstein.

It reported that there was a prima facie case that the corporation was a victim of criminal misconduct, and put the blame on Mr Trur and Dr Rosenbaum. Mr Trur was questioned several times but not arrested until February.

The charges against him cover alleged offences between 1970 and 1974, the period during which he was managing director of the Israel Corporation, chairman of the board of Zim Navigation Company and a director of Haifa Oil Refineries. He is accused of illegally transferring £6.75m to Vaduz companies, stealing £262,000 in interest received on money lent abroad, accepting a bribe of £34,000 from a company of an Italian shipyard to buy ships from the yard and other large bribes.

The bank is controlled by Dr Tibor Rosenbaum, a leading fund raiser for Israel and former treasurer of the World Jewish Congress. Dr Rosenbaum's bank was forced to

Man held after attempt to seize jumbo jet

Tokyo, April 9.—Police arrested a failed businessman who tried to seize a Boeing 747 jumbo jet of Japan Airlines in Tokyo today, planning to hold it to ransom and then escape with the money, using a homemade parachute.

The man aimed a gun at crew members as the jet stood on the tarmac at Haneda international airport, the police said. He fired one shot, injuring nobody, before three policemen answered a radio summons by the pilot, boarded the jet and arrested him.

Jail for snatching U Thant remains

Rangoon, April 9.—Special courts today sentenced 52 people including nine monks and two women, to three to 10 years' jail for snatching the body of U Thant, the United Nations Secretary General.

Chiang Kai-shek body driven through Taipei

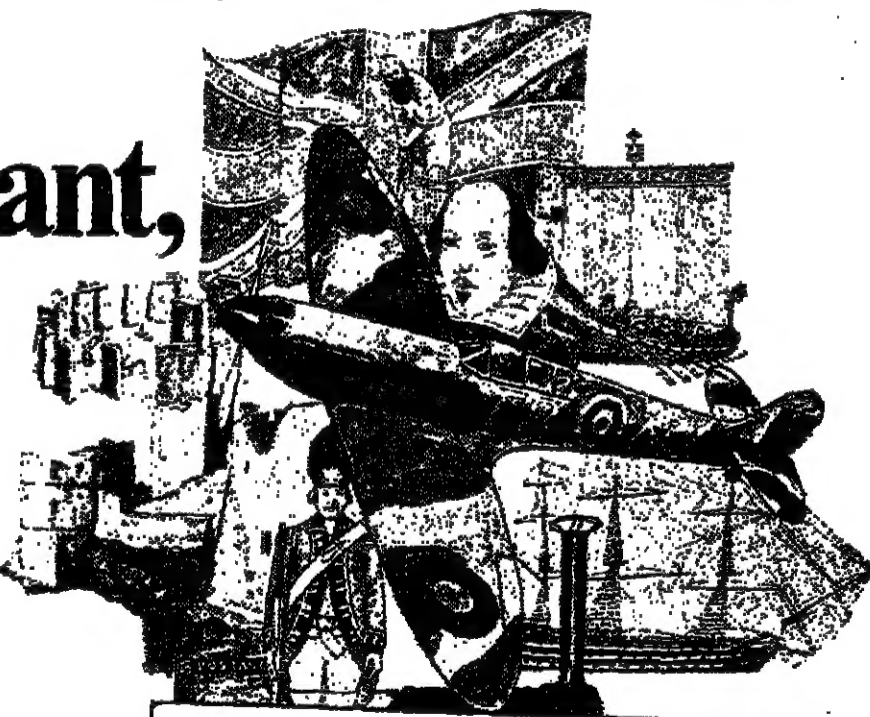
Taipei, April 9.—The body of President Chiang Kai-shek was driven to lie in state in Taipei today through streets decked with thousands of flags at half-mast and lined by students, servicemen and schoolchildren.

The cortege was accompanied by Mrs Chiang, the general's widow, his son Mr Chiang Ching-kuo, the Prime Minister, and other relatives. President Yen Chia-kan headed government leaders in bowing before the body which was dressed in traditional long black and dark blue robes. The body will lie in state until the funeral today week.

The General's testament was displayed in large characters above his coffin. It said that the more and faith of his people should not be shaken by death, "as the sacred task of exterminating communism and recovering the mainland is gaining momentum day by day at this moment"—Reuters.

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FIG. 1. The Queen.

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OVERSEAS

Mr Ford forced to acknowledge that secret assurances were given to President Thieu

From Fred Emery

Washington, April 9. President Ford, wailing with an address on the Vietnam crisis to be given tomorrow night, was forced today to acknowledge that the United States had indeed given secret assurances to President Thieu.

But the White House spokesman insisted that the exchanges were substantially the same as public statements in 1973 that the United States would react "vigorously" to communist violations of the ceasefire.

The disclosures were forced by Senator Henry Jackson, the Democratic presidential contender, who said yesterday that President Ford had only recently become aware of "secret agreements" made early in 1973.

However Mr Ford was said by a White House spokesman to have been apprised of the confidential exchanges shortly after he succeeded Mr Nixon last August.

The senator claimed he wanted only to "clear the deck" so that Congress could act with full knowledge. He is unlikely to be satisfied with President Ford's acknowledgement, having urged "full and complete disclosure" of all documents. The senator's staff say they believe there are Nixon letters to President Thieu, as well as initialled memoranda of conversations, and cables.

The furor aroused by Mr Jackson coincided with a White House meeting of the National Security Council. It further complicates Mr Ford's expected plea for an injection of military aid.

Comments from Congressmen suggest that they remain unimpressed by suggestions by General Frederick Freytag, Army Chief of Staff, that up to \$700m (about £280m) worth of arms, more than twice what Mr Ford has asked, will be needed to save Saigon.

Instead, all the focus is the massive humanitarian relief effort the President has promised, including plans for evacuating at least 150,000 Vietnamese threatened because of their ties with the United States.

The contingency idea of bringing one million people appears never to have been seriously taken up at high level because of the onrush of the Saigon collapse.

In discussing for the first time the secret exchanges between President Thieu and President Nixon, the White House spokesman declined to describe the specific promises they contained, but said Thieu has complained that the United States has failed to fulfill those promises.

Mr Ford has taken up the charge in blaming Congress, and it was in response to this pointing that Mr Jackson exploded, claiming the country had had enough of it, where Congress had never even been aware of such promises.

Mr Nissen, the White House spokesman, refused to say whether the Nixon promise of "vigorously" response included the threatened reinduction of American combatants.

In fact, it has always been understood here that Nixon's quarters that Mr Nixon used the threat of renewed bombing

as a sweetener to get the reluctant President Thieu to sign the agreements.

Today General Haig, now Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, was reported to have admitted the existence of such secret commitments during a talk to officers and diplomats.

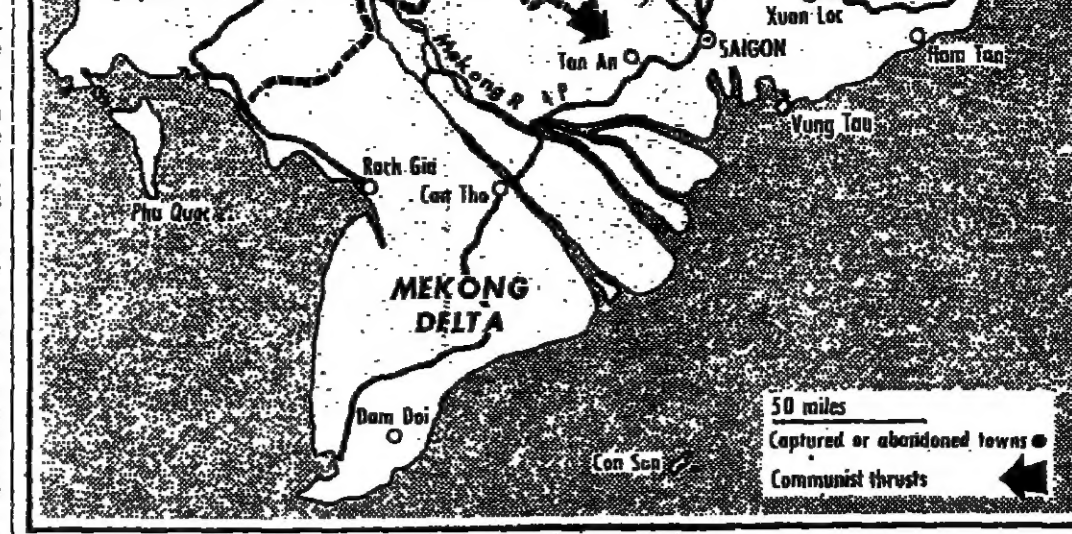
The problem now, however, is for Mr Kissinger, who was the Secretary of State at the time, and who last Saturday denied there were any secret agreements of formal obligations. He said there was only a moral commitment.

He stands accused by Senator Jackson of a pattern of secret agreements. Americans do not insist on covenants openly arrived at, but they do demand that the final covenants be open.

The cautiously worded White House acknowledgement read in part: "The publicly stated policy and intention of the United States Government to continue to provide adequate economic and military assistance and to react vigorously to major violations of the Paris Agreements reflected confidential exchanges between the Nixon Administration and President Thieu at the time."

Whether this dispute will enable Mr Ford to maintain his rumoured intention of being conciliatory towards Congress in his foreign policy address remains to be seen.

Preparations for the address were serious enough to cause Mr Ford, a man who does not forgo his pleasures easily, to let his wife and her birthday party guests go without him to a Pearl Bailey concert last night.



The North Vietnamese must bridge a cultural chasm between their way of life and the South When cycle and moped societies meet

From Jean Thoraval

Hanoi, April 9.—Beyond all questions of political ideology, the events of the last weeks in South Vietnam will bring both the Provisional Revolutionary Government and the people under its administration up against the problem of the meeting and coexistence of two diametrically opposed ways of life.

On one side there are the mass of people imbued with a spurious philosophy whose symbol is the Ho Chi Minh sandal made of bits of motor cycle tyre and inner tube. Today this "sandal society" is coming up against one where people wear poplin shirts and caps, "made in USA". For those in the South drawing up at a filling station to get petrol is as natural as eating a bowl of rice.

This difference is so clearly recognized in Hanoi that it is acknowledged that marrying the socialist bicycle with the capitalist moped is going to be a delicate business. This feeling is noticeable even among the mass of people.

When the first photographs of Da Nang appeared in the Hanoi press after it had fallen most of the North Vietnamese did not hide their immense surprise that "down there" in the South a whole section of the people moved around on noisy, shiny mopeds. Here in Hanoi people are more concerned with

casting a critical eye over the poor quality cycles imported from China and the east European states.

It would be difficult to imagine a sort of exchange by North Vietnamese leaders with half a million bicycles being sent south to give people there a taste of the proletarian existence and 250,000 mopeds being shipped north to add a consumer society gloss. This sort of exchange is simply, of course, an example, but it gives an idea of the extent of the problem.

At the same time it is interesting to note that the North Vietnamese authorities and the National Liberation Front have, over the last decades, made some remarkable efforts to soften the image of the Vietnamese revolutionaries. On the religious side there has been the start of a dialogue with the Vatican and several statements on the freedom of worship, while on the diplomatic front there have been recognition moves which today weigh fairly heavily.

Internally, the accent is on reform. But while there is criticism and self-criticism, North Vietnamese have no hesitation in maintaining that an improvement in production could help satisfy the needs of consumers. But observers hold that the reforms undertaken in the north are not really rooted in the situation in the south. Northern reforms got under

way long before the situation below the 17th Parallel started changing fast. Incidentally, faster than either side has bargained for earlier.

By getting reforms under way North Vietnam can, in future, present the image of a country which knows how to evolve and revise its earlier judgments while not renouncing its Marxist-Leninist philosophy.

The north apparently intends to employ this basic philosophy staple by serving it with a typical North Vietnamese sauce, and many observers hold that the fewer ingredients there are from Moscow and Peking the more tasty the final dish could turn out to be.

But for the time being the leadership is enjoying the fruits of victory and General Nguyen Giap, the Minister of Defence and Vice Premier, has reported to the permanent committee of the National Assembly on "the attacks of the armed forces and the uprising of the people of the south since the beginning of March".

Meanwhile, a special Asian adviser of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, Mr Alexandre Casselle, has arrived to draw up a list of the needs of the PRG for the people in their areas. An aircraft from the East German airline, Interflug, with condensed milk, meat and medicines, is expected tomorrow. — Agence France Presse.

Pressure increases on Phnom Penh

From Bruce Palling

Phnom Penh, April 9

The pressure on Phnom Penh has increased in the past 36 hours after reports that mortar and recoilless rifle fire has been used against the international airport and the capital for the first time since the New Year offensive began.

While the operations of the vital airlift have not yet been disrupted by these developments, the use of these weapons places the insurgents only three miles to the north-west of the airport and at a similar distance from the capital itself along the east bank of the Mekong river.

Foreign medical staff in Phnom Penh have reported receiving civilians injured by mortar fragments. Mortars can be operated and fired by two or three men but the use of the recoilless rifle indicates a bigger force in the vicinity, according to military sources.

Despite these fresh developments, the chief threat to the airlift remains the captured artillery which has been shelling the airport for the past week. The possibility of a ground assault on the airport is also considered highly likely given the recent arrival of Khmer Rouge reinforcements in the

vicinity after their capture of the ferry town of Neak Lom south-east of Phnom Penh last week.

On the northern front insurgents are now thought to control almost all of the north-east road which runs south on the "rocket belt" above the airport. For the past few days it has been dangerous to travel to the northern front lines. The insurgents have taken control of the adjacent bank of the Tonle Sap river thus placing Route 5 in clear machine and mortar fire.

"Route 5, with its rail position compared to the S-1 is now like a shooting gallery," the observer commented.

On the political side, there have been no fresh developments since the return of Boret, the Prime Minister yesterday from Bali. Mr Boret refused to comment on yesterday's claims that Foreign Minister, Mr Chouhavan, the T Foreign Minister, had met for four hours representatives of the other side. Observers in Phnom Penh are highly sceptical of the Thai Government's claim that the impression that it is a middleman in contacts with the other side.

President Thieu should go the French say

From Our Own Correspondent

Paris, April 9

France today told President Thieu of South Vietnam it thinks he should go, to make way for a solution of "national reconciliation".

Without naming President Thieu, President Giscard d'Estaing, discussed the Vietnam crisis at today's Cabinet meeting, and said that "the political authority in Saigon ought to be exercised exclusively by those personalities who show their will to apply 'the relevant political aspects'".

The French are referring to Article 12 which envisaged the creation of a "national council of reconciliation and concord" with equal representation for Saigon, the Vietcong's Provisional Revolutionary Government and the so-called "third force" elements.

Vietcong award for pilot who bombed palace

Saigon, April 9.—The p

who 'dropped' 500lb bombs President Thieu's palace Saigon yesterday escaped landed at an airfield in a communist-held territory, a Vietcong spokesman said here night.

Major Phung Nam, the Provisional Revolutionary Government spokesman based Saigon's Tan Son Nhut airfield, said the pilot, Lieutenant Nguyen Thanh Trung, aged 24, had been promoted to captain and decorated by the Vietcong for his act.

He said Lieutenant Trung had flown his F5 fighter bomber to a safe landing at airfield in Vietcong territory but added that he had not been informed of the location. The pilot had been awarded PRG military exploits or second class. Major Nam said Reuter.

Would-be starters in nuclear race

From Patrick Brogan

Washington, April 9

The director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), Mr Fred Ikle, gave warning today that the news on nuclear proliferation is bad. "Several countries, not now nuclear-weapons states, appear to be making a determined effort to acquire a capability that would enable them to build their own atomic bombs", he said.

He did not name any of them, but remarked that India, Israel, Argentina and Brazil have all refused to sign the non-proliferation treaty. India has exploded a nuclear device, claiming that the explosion was "peaceful". Mr Ikle said, of these unnamed states: "How far they

will go, and how many others will join them, is still open questions. And in the future we will have to face the fact that some governments might not be able to defeat attempts of criminal groups to acquire materials to make bombs. Unless we find new ways to cope with this risk, it will increase because of the growing spread of peaceful use.

Mr Ikle was speaking at a conference on the non-proliferation treaty here.

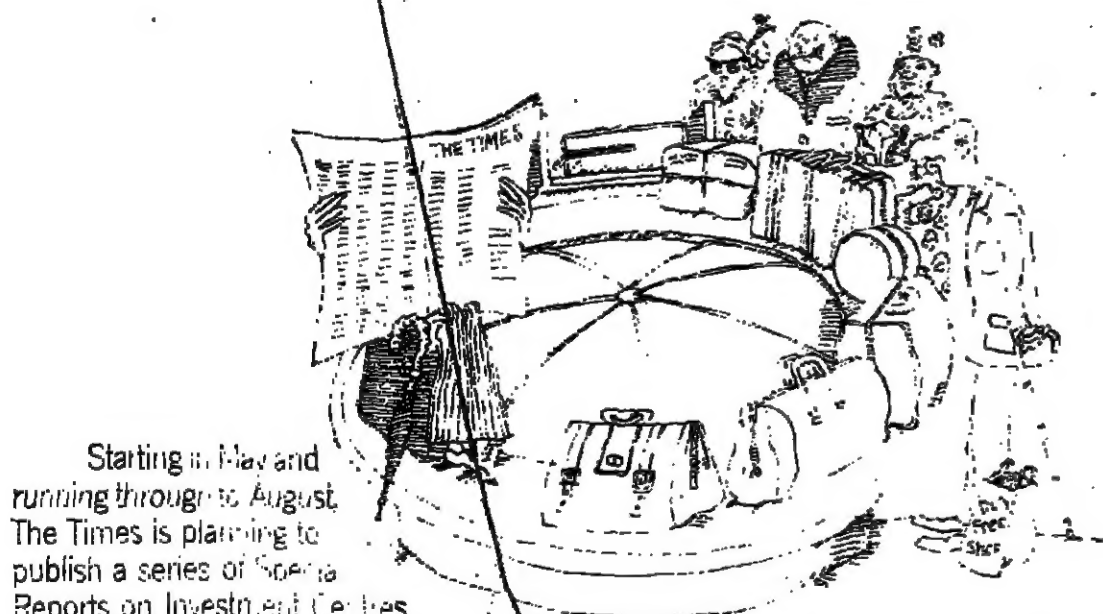
There is to be a review conference on the non-proliferation treaty in Geneva next May. Mr Ikle said that the way this problem is managed will have the deepest impact on America's future. Our political system, our open society, could not survive in a world where the threat of nuclear destruction would be an

everyday tool for political ends.

He pointed out that a number of countries with the capacity to make nuclear weapons had refrained from doing so, mentioning Japan, West Germany and Canada. "Capability did not automatically produce intent", he said, but now we suspect that the intent to make nuclear weapons exists. In several places, even though the capacity is not there yet."

Mr Ikle said that the spread of nuclear capability is often the result of the spread of peaceful nuclear technology. "Unfortunately, shortsighted commercial interests sometimes militate against the application of effective controls. It is essential that supplier nations agree not to undercut each other on nuclear safeguards."

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Vietcong message disrupts Oscar awards ceremony

From Peter Strafford

New York, April 9

Vietnam cast its shadow last night over the Oscar award ceremony in Hollywood, normally just a showcase for films and those involved in them. The award for the best documentary of the year went to *Hearts and Minds*, a study of American involvement in Vietnam, and controversy broke loose.

Mr Bert Schneider, one of the producers of the film, celebrated the award by reading out a telegram from the head of the Paris delegation of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam (Vietcong). Mr Frank Sinatra responded with a public apology to the audience for "any political references on this programme".

Hearts and Minds has been warmly welcomed by opponents of American involvement in Vietnam, mainly for its emphasis on the brutality of United States policy; but few critics have regarded it as an objective analysis of the war, in spite of its aspirations.

In the Vietcong's telegram from Paris, Mr Binh To Thi thanked the American people for "all they have done for peace" while Mr Schneider added his own comment about the coming "liberation" of South Vietnam. There was a mixture of cheers and boos in response.

Mr Sinatra's statement was apparently read out after consultation with Mr Bob Hope, who was also there; but he said it was a statement by the

Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences as a whole, the body which awards the Oscars, and this was when the trouble began.

Miss Shirley Maclaine confronted Mr Sinatra offstage, she told reporters afterwards, and denounced him for the statement. She also was a member of the academy, she said, and had not been consulted.

Other awards went to *Godfather II*, as best picture, to Mr Art Carney as best actor for his performance in *Harry and Tonto*, and to Miss Ellen Burstyn for her performance in *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*.

Miss Ingrid Bergmann won an award as best supporting actress for her role in *Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express*. The award for the best foreign film went to *Amarcord*, Fellini's film about his childhood on the Adriatic coast.

Altogether *Godfather II* won six Oscars. The *Towering Inferno* won awards for one of its songs and for its cinematography and editing.

Los Angeles, April 8.—Robert de Niro, who played the young Don Corleone in *Godfather II*, won the best supporting actor award. Besides this and the best picture prize, the other four Oscars for *Godfather II* were for direction, writing, original dramatic score and art direction.

"We tried to make a film that would be a really good film," Mr Francis Ford Coppola said as he collected the direction award. His first film of the series, *The Godfather*, won an Oscar two years ago.—AP.

Babies 'import' condemned by Red Cross

Geneva, April 9.—The adop-

tion of Vietnamese children contravenes the Geneva Conventions for the protection of civilian populations, a spokesman for the International Committee of the Red Cross said in Geneva today.

The 1949 conventions permitted providing temporary homes for children affected by war but forbade "formal and definitive adoption such as is being practised now when everyone wants to import Vietnamese children".

They laid down guarantees for the receiving and housing of children under the age of 15 in a neutral country while the conflict lasted. Opportunity should be given for the practice by them of their religion, and education was to be provided where possible by persons of the same cultural tradition. — Agence France Presse.

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Moderate Africans backed on policy towards Mr Vorster

status," he added.—Reuter.

Oor Cape Town Correspondent writes: "The British Government made it clear yesterday that a withdrawal of South African paramilitary forces from Rhodesia was dependent on the Rhodesians becoming effective in Rhodesia."

Government officials declined to comment on the speech by Mr. Mwaanga in Dar-es-Salaam. The Rhodesian Government made no mention of the withdrawal being dependent on a ceasefire.

South African officials, however, drew attention to the fact that the Rhodesian Government had not attended Mr. Smith's meeting with Mr. Vorster in Cape Town last month, when it was reaffirmed that South African forces would not be withdrawn unless the Rhodesians agreed to be "effective" only "as soon as a ceasefire becomes effective."

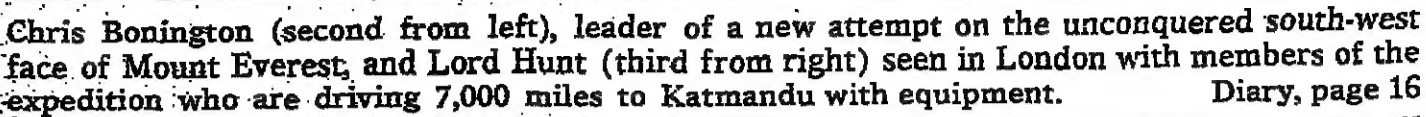
Offer by Gen Amin to take over from Queen

Britain held in Uganda on sedition charge

From Our Correspondent
Nairobi, April 9

Mr. Bennett Hays, a British lecturer at Makerere University, in Kampala, has been arrested on a charge of sedition.

News of the arrest was given by President Amin by Mr. Oboto Ofulu, the Minister of Internal Affairs, and Mr. Okelwangi, the head of the police special branch.



Why banana tycoon leapt from the 44th floor

Things started to go badly in the banana business, however. Bad weather hit bananas in 1973, other firms started to import bananas to the United States, and seven countries in Central and South America

sion" in Honduras recently with General Lopez losing his position as commander of the armed forces and activity by young, leftist Army officers. The company is afraid that its whole banana holdings, 28,000 acres, might be expropriated. It could also affect its posi-

The action was aimed at preventing the company from making what the suit called future untrue statements about its operations.—AP.

Last mule troop to be disbanded

Prague, April 9.—Dr Kurt Waldheim, the United Nations Secretary-General, arrived in Prague today for talks with Czechoslovak leaders, including Dr Gustav Husak, the Communist Party leader.

Sydney, April 9.—Clem Curtis, lead singer of the British pop group Foundation, was remanded on \$A100 (£56) bail in a Sydney court today charged with assaulting a man at the Sydney beach suburb of Bondi yesterday.

Moscow, April 9.—The Crimea astro-physical observatory in Kiev has discovered a new comet on the border between the Leo and Cancer constellations and has named it 1975-E.

Belgrade, April 9.—Mr Djemal Bijedic, the Yugoslav Premier, has left for talks in Moscow amid growing signs of strains in Yugoslav-Soviet relations after Russia's assertion that its troops liberated Yugoslavia.

Tokyo, April 9.—A stone thrown out from a volcano damaged the windshield of a TriStar airliner as it flew over southern Japan yesterday with 99 on board.

Delhi, April 9.—Mrs Gandhi announced today that the first Indian-built space satellite has been sent to the Soviet Union for launching.

3 African patrol fired on from Angola

Today's announcement came at
st after a South African Air-
nes 747 jumbo jet was hit by
all arms fire as it was land-
g at the Angolan capital of
anda on Monday night. It
is thought that the two inci-
nts were not related—
ruter.

'Peace agreement in Angola

Lisbon, April 9.—The chiefs of staff of each of the three Angolan liberation movements have agreed on an immediate cessation of hostilities, the Portuguese news agency ANP reported today. Orders had been posted that troops would not be allowed out of barracks armed except on justified patrols.

Mr Smith backs down over planned salary increases

Mr. Smith said he was making this amendment because of possible period of economic belt tightening. Under the Bill pro-

British banks criticized on their role in South Africa

The Midland Bank has a South African subsidiary, but does have "minor involvement of less than 5 per cent" in the Standard and Chartered Bank, which has an important holding

The increases caused controversy among even the most ardent supporters of the ruling Rhodesian Front. The feeling is that although members of Parliament deserve an increase at the present time it is not opportune.

**criticized on
South Africa**

Mr. Tuke said he entirely accepted the sincerity of the motives of the anti-apartheid group, but he could not acquiesce to their demand that the bank should withdraw completely from South Africa. The protesters represented a small minority of shareholders, and the board of directors had a duty to represent the interests of shareholders as a whole.

Euphrates focus of Iraq-Syria rift

Ever since the Middle East war of October 1973, Iraq has attacked Syria for its lack of acceptance of United Nations Resolution 242, branded the Arab revolutionaries as "capitalist reaction".

The propaganda exchanges became more serious after Iraq's recent rapprochement with the Shah of Iran.

Tired of Iraq's persistent political campaigning as a cheapness, the Syrian regime went on the offensive. It attacked the agreement between the Shah and Iraq that Iraq

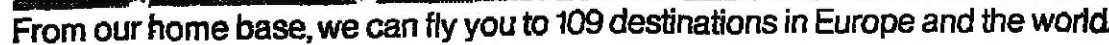
The Iraqi reply came this week when it lodged a formal protest with the Arab League over the ill effects for Iraq of the Tabqa dam which now harnesses the Euphrates. Syria. The Iraqis said the resulting reduction in the flow

The benefits to Syria of the Russian-built dam at Tabqa are considerable. It is estimated that when the overall project has been completed, some 1.48m acres will be irrigated and 800,000 kilowatt-hours

Damascus, April 9.—The Syrian Baath Party tonight condemned the "rightist" Iraq clique "for betraying the Arab nation and being 'in collusion with imperialism'."

The sixth party congress passed a resolution saying that the March 8 Iraqi-Iranian agreement settling all their problems "revealed the collusion of the rightist Iraq clique with imperialism." — Agency France Press.

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Seven times a best man and never a... well, you know. I feel amply qualified in the subject of rings. Wedding rings, engagement rings, maternity rings, anniversary rings, bull rings, I view them all with a happy eye. What has surprised me is a definite change in custom, where it now seems not uncommon for women to give their men rings as well.

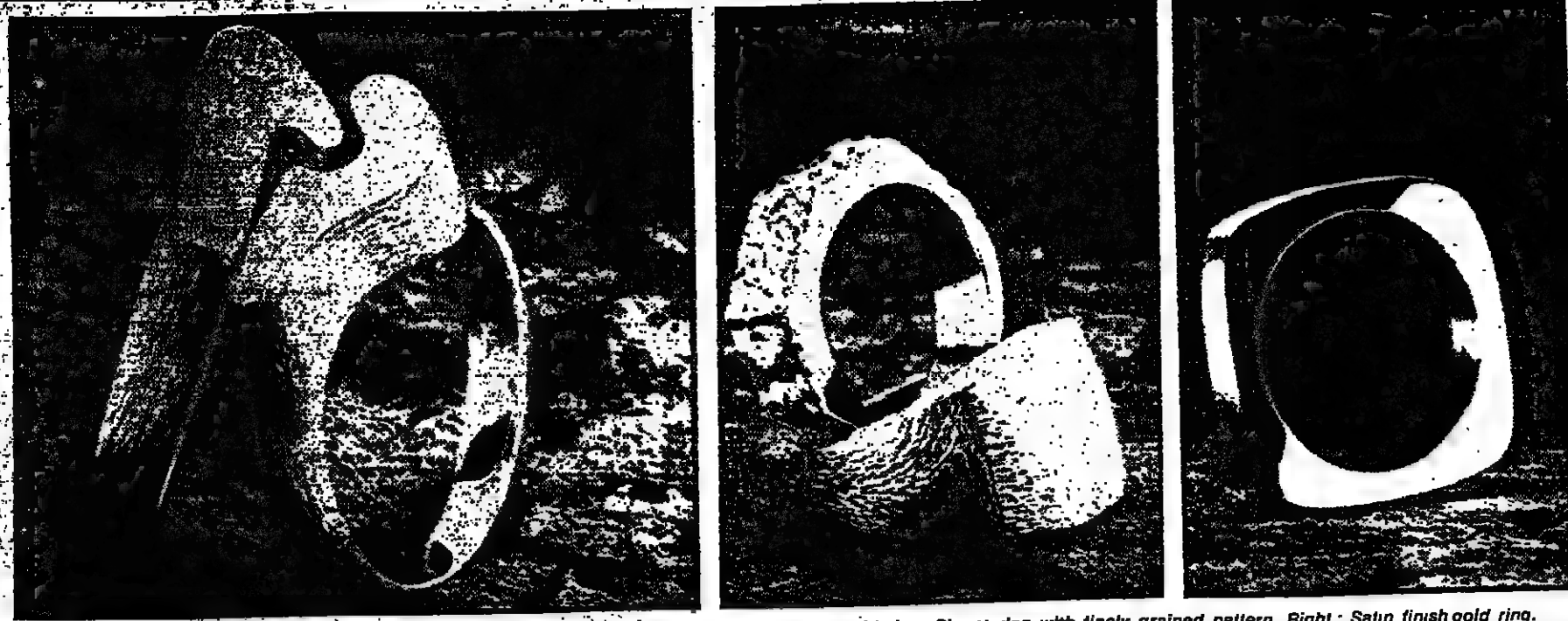
On the Continent, men have always worn wedding rings. But not since I was about to be best man to Romeo (in the end, it turned out both rings to the jeweller) have I had to carry no rings to the altar. Customs have changed and with the excellent range of betrothal rings Paul Podolsky I can see why. Certainly no male chauvinist, Podolsky has designed rings for both sexes, though the designs are so timeless I do not see why they should not be unisex. Of the collection for men (called Staged, and with such fine merchandise I would have thought they could have come up with a better name) I greatly admired a simple, satin-finished, square ring with rounded corners in yellow gold.

In 9-carat this comes at about £60. There is an 18-carat version which costs around £85. Then there is a very chunky signet ring which is £135 in 18-carat yellow gold.

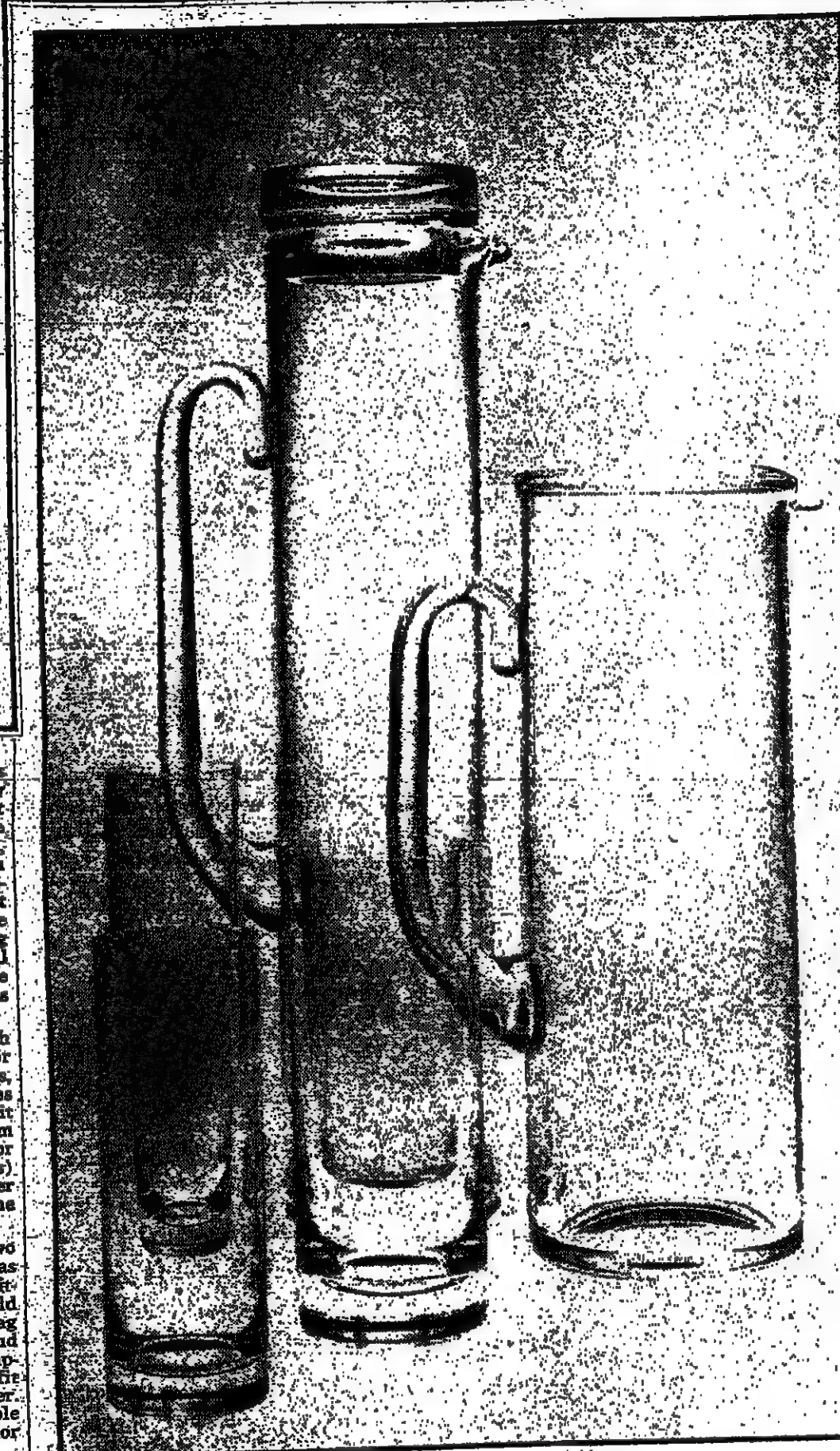
If you like the idea of a diamond engagement ring on a man's hand, then there is a magnificent pair of interlocking yellow gold rings in 18-carat, one of which is set with a brilliant-cut diamond. The "suite" costs around £195 and can be seen at Abeler & Co. 10, William Street, London, SW1X 9HL (01-35 5873). They will insure and set the rings to you and send you a colour leaflet and a full price list if you ask.

The leaflet also shows the thapsody range of rings for women. These are very tempting in yellow gold and yellow and white gold. While they are certainly not so big as the others, I can think of some husbands who would prefer the lighter, sculptured look.

The rings are made by Abeler & Co. 877, Benjamin Street, London, EC1M 6QJ, who, ready to not sell directly to the customer.



Left: Solitaire diamond betrothal ring with matching wedding ring. Centre: Ruggedly styled gold ring. Signet ring with finely grained pattern. Right: Satin finish gold ring.



Ignorant as I am, I thought that baccarat was just the rotten game I once lost so heavily at in Deauville. But then I discovered Asprey's, where there is sold some glass called Baccarat which is so beautiful it almost begs to be bought.

This fine French crystal is given its brilliance by lead oxide, which constitutes nearly a third of Baccarat crystal. The quality control is so severe that about half the factory's output is discarded. What is left is both ornamental and functional.

As for the functional pieces, Roseaux is one of my favourite designs, one of extreme simplicity and purity of line. The tumblers are £4.10 each (all sizes are the same price). The big jug is £32.85 and the smaller one without the stopper is £27.70.

Obviously production is limited, though you can order specific designs. Others, very similar, may be more readily available. The number of stockists is restricted and carefully selected. The Importers, Universal Importers House, 23 King Street, London W3 9LA (01-992 7058) would tell you if there is one near you.

A local building contractor wanted so much to fix a loose drainpipe on my house that I decided to do it myself. Now I am not very good on ladders and only realized just how bad I was when I discovered I did not possess a ladder. My fingers did the marathon round the Yellow Pages before I found a hire firm that would rent me a ladder (you have guessed) for more than the builder wanted in the first place.

There are, I know, lots of hire companies and it may seem invidious to select one. But Hire Service Shops Ltd, whose head office is at Essex Road, Acton, London, W3 9JB (01-992 0101) do seem very reliable and friendly.

If you are spring cleaning, or want to hire a Geiger counter, try them. There are branches all over the country, though they seem strongest around London, Birmingham and Manchester.

Medieval spices are even nicer

Food without seasoning, you do not need me to tell you, is worse than no food at all. Women seem to be more at fault in this than men—I can, on request, supply you with a list of at least a dozen homes (some stately) where the cooking is done by the woman of the house who has an absolute phobia about spices, not to mention garlic.

If you are in to spice fun, as I am sure most of the readers of this column are, the Compleat and Accomplished Medieval Cook Set could be just what you need. The set comprises a package of six vials of spice—galangal, cubeb, powder-forte, powder-douce, juniper berries and saundersys. There are also six pre-potted pots of herbs (with detailed instructions for growing and drying them) which are a melange of anise, borage, burnet, clary, hyssop, lovage, orach, purslane (no, not the garter king of), rocket sorrel and tansy.

A booklet describes the herbs and spices and offers 60 authentic medieval recipes discovered by Shelagh Baxter during her researches into medieval cookery manuscripts. So far, I have only tried a few of the recipes. But I think you will find them as tasty as they are fun to create (cook is hardly the right word).

A little meat dish, which serves four, gave me a definite feeling of Henry the Eighth. It is called Monchelet. "Take moton and smite it to gobett, seeth in gode broth, cast thereto erbes yswew..." No, you do it, and there is a translation into modern English.

The whole set is available by post, £3.99 plus 25p. from The Compleat Cook, 9 Porchester Square, London, W2 6AN.

What is soft and green and needs no mowing?

The inclement weather (totally coincidental with the Government's absurd business of summer time, you will notice) has enabled me to put off one of the most hated garden chores—the first mow of the lawn. When I contemplate the totally ungrasslike quality of my grass I sometimes wonder why I pretend to have a lawn at all. Yes, I know, because all the neighbours do.

Well, I am going to move ahead of the Joneses and have some Astroturf this summer. Astroturf needs no watering or mowing, the garden nasties will not feed on it and it is not noted for

any affinity to weeds. It looks green all the year round and, I find, is excellent for croquet. You will not want the "stadium" surface—perhaps you will—which is the top quality suitable for soccer, rugby, hockey and so on. If you do, it would cost you £250,000 approximately to cover the ground of your stadium (and that includes floodlighting).

The "action surface" is nice and soft and is widely used for children's playgrounds. It costs about £7 a square yard. The "patio surface" is designed for smaller areas, patios and

swimming pool surrounds. This is also around £7 a square yard. The "landscape surface" is meant for all garden uses and at £6 a square yard is obviously the most economical.

If you are worried by the fact that Astroturf is the invention of the American company Monsanto, bear in mind that most of the surfaces imported to this country are in fact made in Belgium. So at least it is in the Market, as it were. A complete list of Astroturf distributors is available from: P. A. L. Skinner Ltd., 109-110 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HF (01-636 8862).

Once you have installed your Astroturf and decided that the English summer is so ghastly that you need Bermuda anyway, there will be the problem of what to do with your houseplants while you are away. For a fee I could pop round to water them occasionally.

You might prefer to use Cambrelle, a capillary matting self-watering system made from the long-life, nylon welded fabric developed by ICI. It avoids the need for top watering of individual plants while at

the same time ensuring that they are not overwatered. All you have to do is line a large container with kitchen foil and cover the base with the ICI matting. Water is then applied to the matting rather than to the plants that you have placed in their pots in the container. This matting holds up to 1½ pints of water a square yard and costs £2.11 for the 1.93m by 1.37m size, or £1.12 for the 1.23m by 96cm size. It will shortly be available from most gardening shops and centres.

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Why EEC benefits are better

One of the reasons on the left for disliking the EEC is that its objectives can only interfere with Britain's commitment to social welfare. But a study by the Royal Institute of International Affairs and PEP published today, shows little evidence of either smugness or fear being justified.

Not only does Britain's social security system come off in parts rather badly by comparison with EEC countries, but the authors of the survey paint a picture of a harmless and benevolent EEC commission which, having dropped all thought of "harmonization", busies itself with promoting schemes of social improvement.

The Commission is currently recommending, for example, the extension of day-nurseries, a legal right to paid maternity leave, the provision of leave for parents with sick children, and unsegregated education for women.

Today's survey suggests that this sort of activity, springing both from trade union pressure and a realization in Brussels that the EEC has got to show a human face, is now characterizing developments in the Community machinery.

Social Security and Medical Care in Britain and the Continent by Roger Lawson, leaves little comparative praise for existing British social security provisions. Although they are universal, they are also minimal, compared with European workers' benefits, and means-testing since the war has also increased.

"British unemployment and sickness benefits are on the whole considerably less generous for the majority of workers than in most other European countries," he says.

Most retired EEC workers are also getting better pensions, at the sort of levels promised ultimately under the Labour Government's pension scheme. In 1971, the study's figures show the percentage of average net earnings received under the main pension schemes by an average man and his wife was 35.1 in the UK. In the Netherlands it was 64.3, in Germany 50, in Belgium 58.8, in France 51.5 and in Italy 33.5.

Although London schemes tend to be complex and tied to the earnings-related inequalities of the market-place, the survey says the same criticisms apply to Britain's past emphasis on occupational schemes. Most countries have better pensions for disabled workers, and higher general family benefits.

The origins of these differences lie in history. Trade union pressure, which has boosted provision for employed workers, was lacking until recently in Britain. In the years following the post-war nationalization of welfare, France's high family allowances follow a preoccupation with population policy, and German emphasis on "national efficiency" has particularly helped employed workers.

It hardly seems appropriate to describe social welfare in the EEC as old-fashioned, Mr Lawson says. Britain spends less of her national income on social security, health and welfare, than any country but Ireland. To raise levels of those of Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark would mean an increase of more than is being currently spent on the whole of the National Health Service and on supplementary benefits.

Bruce Reed, discussing the growth of social welfare plans within the EEC, says its intentions are now more realistic. The EEC commission, through the studies and recommendations of its "Social Action Programme" is finding a role as a catalyst, which should help provide minimum standards throughout Europe. "Britain has little to lose and a lot to gain." As the study has appeared fortuitously in the midst of the great British pre-referendum debate, there is no chance at all of its optimism being uncritically accepted.

David Leigh
Chatham House/PEP. Social Security in the EEC by Roger Lawson and Bruce Reed.

Politicians not planners must take decisions that will save London

We have been too ready in the past to make two major assumptions about London: one, that as its industry leaps forward all its industrial workers could do the same; and two, that London's future role should be more or less exclusively concerned with the provision of capital city and international services. These assumptions have ignored at least two important facts: housing and race.

Housing has been at the centre of local government controversy within London at least since 1964. Until very recently there have been few signs of progress in reaching three essential goals: a council housing allocation scheme that recognizes the very differing degrees of housing need in neighbouring boroughs; facilities for transfers and exchanges across London; and getting families in greatest housing and domestic need out of London to green and pleasant land in the new and expanding towns.

At long last the GLC has produced a housing consultation document which attempts to take the first tentative steps towards a coherent housing strategy for London. It is very welcome. But vital as it is, it comes, of course, at a time of massive falls in the rate of completion of new dwellings, and severe cut backs in improvement grants to local authorities.

The absence of an effective strategy over the years on the three counts mentioned above has driven the inner city to pursue some truly horrifying public housing policies. I am thinking not just of high rise developments—now universally condemned—but the astounding fact that since the war, nearly every new home built, one in four or five, has been pulled down for what is euphemistically called "planning gain"—in which planners hope that, with time more dwellings could be built on the vacated sites. It has proved to be a never fulfilling prophecy. The post-war housing drive has thus—after a stroke—been virtually negated.

Added to these difficulties—again often with the best of intentions—local authorities have pursued compulsory purchase policies which, through shortage of know-how, manpower, money and alternative housing, have left great areas unoccupied and ripe targets for vandalism and squatting. Some senior officials in local

government seem to spend more time in the courts now than on constructive housing administration.

London's housing situation illustrates well, therefore, the planning political syndrome. It may well be another five years—perhaps even 10—before we see significant strides to effect greater mobility within the total public housing stock of Greater London. These will be critical years for mutual racial tolerance in London.

At the moment there is no doubt that as the coloured population grows it is both fanning out to settle and colonize "new" areas, and also forming a more solidified element in the older areas of housing stress. Many young black people want to do skilled factory work; they want to remain near the places they know and where some degree of cultural integrity has developed. In this respect, not least, regional policy must now be out of step with local social need in London. And it is to this question that much more sensitive thought must be given. To a very limited extent this is happening.

Some of the recent grants under the tiny Urban Programme have recognized the need to aid local programmes for occupational welfare through community industry in inner London. But London ever since the war has been a principal donor of industrial life blood to the older depressed areas. One does not doubt that need for new employment; nor does one doubt the capacity of London to shed much of its industry. But there comes a point where the costs outweigh the benefits.

This situation has now been reached in parts of the inner city. Our study, the Inner City, presented to central government and published today, instances one or two areas of London where employment and housing stress together have reached an intense level—the dockland areas and the belt across south London centred on Brixton.

The urgency of London's inner city problem is racial in at least two senses—first, that there are increasing concentrations of British coloured people there; and secondly, that contrary to the general trends of unemployment in London in recent years the main centres of coloured settlement show slowly rising levels of unemployment and under employment. Present

'The absence of an effective strategy has driven the inner city to pursue some horrifying public housing policies'

talk of ensuring equality of opportunity will remain fiction so long as such domestic occupational and environmental conditions remain.

It is too easy simply to say that those people should uproot and follow the jobs. Indeed, today's studies instances of the magnetic power that the inner city sustains for many coloured people. The report also shows diminishing chances for the less skilled population to move to the future suburbs in recent years. There are again glimpses of the planning-political syndrome that London has somehow to counter. Yet the more the local authorities, central government and other statutory undertakings seek to do by way of controlling the fabric of our cities "in the general public interest"—the more the problems seem to multiply and take new forms.

The first real central government recognition that London has its own kind of problems came in 1964, when the decision to raise restrictions on industrial development certificates for parts of inner London. As a policy change on its own it is probably barely relevant, but as a sign that London's problems are being considered in a new direction it is surely a significant beginning on the part of central government.

It is essential however to diagnose the inner city problem accurately before prescribing medicine. London's inner city is massive—with more than two and a half million residents it more than swallows up the sum total of problem areas in the nation's other large cities. But the inner city problems are complex too and

contain some strange paradoxes. Conventional analysis is often wide of the mark. For instance, great stress is still officially laid on the mouth by month level of unemployment and shifts in the net balance between job vacancies and the unemployed. Yet my analyses show for London that despite the rapid loss of jobs since 1966, registered unemployment over wide areas of London has been lower in 1973 (just after the largest wave of redundancies) than in 1963 or 1953 when unemployment levels were higher than usual.

Again by conventional yardsticks London has displayed a remarkable ability to adjust to 350,000 redundancies in just seven years.

Some hard skills as readily usable in the service industries as in manufacturing; but very many formerly redundant industrial workers are now in the "non-productive" fields of government. Where say, 10 years ago, this progressive shift of manpower might have been taken for granted, at a time when Britain's industrial prosperity is at stake it poses real questions as to the wisdom of such standing regional policies. I am not suggesting for a moment that individual factories keep in their employ more workers than they need, but rather that one measure of the national account viability may well be the overall proportion of the total workforce that is in "productive" work: that proportion has been dropping fast.

At least three recent reports on Britain's survival question the wisdom of reliance on invisible earnings at the expense of locally based industrial investment. Town planning practice at the local level in Greater London, and our international competitiveness, have been seen as interconnected.

Inescapably therefore in breaking out of London's planning-political syndrome one turns to the approaches to physical urban renewal, to the concomitant social policies in the inner urban areas, and to the role of government. Inner London may well be the nation's main regional planning problem in the next decade: not least because its central business district houses the functions of national government.

At the highest level of government, three current issues give hope that a saner and better balanced macro-policy can emerge; the community land bill could, if used wisely, enable new industrial plant to

settle in parts of London at a much lower cost; the clear implication of the messages reaching the Layfield Committee on local government finance is that given a local income tax basis on which to support public expenditure, much of the administration that is now tediously and frustratingly done from Whitehall could be done more locally—provided of course the regional revenue sharing units can bridge the distances between where people work (and pay their taxes) and where they live. Third, the clear implication of this whole article is that in exchange for further industrial growth in London, the government must come about a devolution of central government manpower to the regions.

Decentralization from London—no longer of industry but of administration—could provide new jobs in the very areas that have been at the centre of governmental regional policies since the war—the older provincial conurbations, whose formidable problems of obsolescence and industrial decline have not about it a population and high unemployment.

Vital too is the approach of professional staffs to the task of urban renewal. For all that massive reconstruction was the passport of the immediate post-war years, town planners especially still have the most rudimentary training in urban renewal as a generic and essentially human—process. Too many still regard it as dirty work and all too easily avoided. It is in fact their main task for the next three decades.

Such approaches are not a substitute for large scale plan making, though I do think too much effort has been expended on physical master planning for all the good it has done. Rather I become more convinced that the middle tier of government concerned with that undefined term "strategic" planning should be an arm of central, not of local government; and that its essential functions lie in ensuring along with the private sector, the full potential utilization of the three principles of production—land, manpower, and capital.

Dr Graham Lomas
The author is general secretary of the London Council of Social Service and is a former head of the policy section of the GLC's strategic planning branch. He has been a member of the City (London Council of Social Service £225).

A very bad day in Archipova Street

Bernard Levin

There are certain ironies that come with this job, and some of them are more poignant than others. I do not think, for instance, that many of my readers would argue that I write too seldom about the Soviet Union, or that, when I do so, I fail to make my article clear. And yet I do not think that I could make anything about that mighty and terrible prison more clear than it is made in a letter I have just received, which speaks for itself, and for very much more than itself. So with out another word I shall now get out of the way and let the writer of it occupy the rest of this column.

"I have just returned from a week's visit to Moscow as a British tourist and I want to tell you, as briefly as I can, of my own personal experience. Like I suspect most western visitors to Russia, I had found much of my time taken up by organized tourists: coach parties to places of historical and cultural interest. Indeed there is such a full programme of these that a timid tourist could quite easily spend a whole week without venturing more than a few hundred yards from his hotel on his own. (Tourist officials capitalize on this timidity, which one American guide book aptly describes as the "safety factor"—the feeling of uneasiness that

afflicts probably most tourists when they begin to wander more than a short distance from their hotel or coach.)

"Because of this, and because ordinary Muscovites certainly do not venture into the hotels set aside for tourists, it is remarkably difficult, quite apart from the language barrier, to find any opportunity for talking to Russians other than tourist guides and officials.

"Last Saturday, however, I made my way with an American friend to the central Jewish synagogue in Archipova Street. The synagogue stands only a few hundred yards away from the Communist Party headquarters and at most ten minutes' walk from the central tourist coaches by St Basil's Cathedral in Red Square.

"But the contrast could not be more evident. Crowded barriers were stacked against the entrance to the street, and as we walked along it we passed a number of jeeps half up on the pavement, while the immediate vicinity of the synagogue was surrounded by only a few militia carrying truncheons and bull-horns. We made our way through these into the synagogue.

"I am not a Jew, nor was my friend, but I shall never forget the next half hour as from all sides people clustered round to ask us questions, hear our news, or simply to hold our hands and say 'shalom'.

"We communicated mostly in German through my friend, and one constant theme was the plea for us to contact relatives who had left the Soviet Union and from whom no word had since been received despite repeated letters.

"Despite all differences of race, creed and culture, I had a deeper feeling of being at home in those few moments than at any other time during my stay in the Soviet Union. But the synagogue was not the only place where I felt at home. It was the Passover Sabbath, but there was no dancing in the streets. Our friends told us that they were permitted to stand under the portico outside, but any movement onto the street was immediately broken up.

"When eventually we left we found this out for ourselves. For the very moment we stepped onto the pavement we were under the portico outside, but any movement onto the street was immediately broken up. We turned to look back on our friends still gathered at the top of the steps.

"We both of us then prepared to take photos—apart

from military installations and railway stations you can photograph whatever you like in Moscow. Tourist guides had constantly been reminding us—but the officer in charge in Archipova Street was not concerned with tourist etiquette and gripping his bull-horn he moved across the street to order us away. We were then 'escorted' up the street. You do not quarrel with authority in these circumstances but as a result I have no picture to show you of what was a truly sickening sight—jackbooted troops patrolling the synagogue steps.

"Later we heard that the troops had broken up the service. (Western correspondents I spoke to knew of this continuing harassment, but apart from the briefest agency reports they ignore it. Any fuller coverage quickly leads to censorship.)

"This whole incident was for me an experience which put into perspective all the other events of the week. But how many tourists, I wonder, come away impressed by the gay and carefree atmosphere of the ground, the fine monuments and museums and the admittedly superb ballet, opera and concerts, without ever glimpsing this side of the Soviet regime?

"Yes if anywhere in Moscow deserves to be on every western tourist's programme it is the synagogue in Archipova Street. I have no doubt of the comfort it brings to those within, but a visit also offers a unique occasion for a Jew to affirm belief in the principles of individual liberty and freedom of assembly.

"Moreover, while isolated individuals like myself and my friend can successfully be in these circumstances but as a result I have no picture to show you of what was a truly sickening sight—jackbooted troops patrolling the synagogue steps.

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Ronald Butt

Where is the line between loyalty and responsibility?

In today's House of Commons debate on the Referendum Bill, the Conservative Opposition has an opportunity to do something that at least could help to rescue the sovereignty of Parliament from the constitutional shambles which Mr Wilson has created in Labour's interest.

The Opposition can say that it intends to move an amendment to the Bill which will write into it beyond any doubt whatever its outcome, is advisory and not mandatory on Parliament. And if the Conservative leaders will do this, let Mr Wilson try to oppose that proposition if he dares.

As things now stand, we have some general but informal utterances from the Prime Minister to the effect that the referendum will not be binding on Parliament. That, of course, is the assumption that everyone is loosely making. But we also have Mr Wilson's informal, and perhaps no less potent, statement that he does not suppose that MPs would be so arrogant as to cast their votes in the House against the referendum verdict.

In other words, he is saying that the referendum verdict is morally binding on MPs—and seems to me to be a very nice question how far it is possible to distinguish between what is morally binding and what is constitutionally binding on Parliament.

No doubt on this "unique" referendum occasion, most MPs would feel morally obliged to vote in support of a referendum verdict which gave an 80, a 70 or even a 60 per cent majority for one side of the other. But what about a 54 per cent majority one way or the other—and perhaps still about 50 per cent of the electorate and after a campaign in which it was clear that the issue had been bedevilled by political cross-purpose feuding?

Ought Parliament not to be morally and constitutionally free in such circumstances to say that, no clear verdict having been returned by the people, it is the duty of the House of Commons to use its sovereign authority of representing and interpreting the public mind?

And ought it not to be free to do this without anyone daring to say (whatever the referendum result) that the House is flouting the "will of the people", which is what certain sections of the Labour Party would say if the House of Commons decided to refuse to implement a referendum decision by no more than a majority of 1 per cent to take Britain out of Europe?

The only way to secure this reserve power of Parliament in the event of a dangerously ambiguous referendum outcome is by writing the status of the referendum clearly into the law. And if the Conservative front bench will, upon giving notice to say that it proposes to amend the Bill to strengthen the consultative nature of the referendum, how can Mr Wilson clearly oppose it?

If he does, he is conceding (and would be prepared to concede it?) that he is responsible for a measure which he covertly intends to be morally and effect, constitutionally binding on the actions of the House of Commons. The further implication is that, in the event of an ambiguous result, the House of Commons should accept the "government's" (what precisely does that mean these days?) advice as to what should be done.

Mr Wilson has created political chaos in his own party which could be his and its ruin. But far worse is the damage he is doing to the delicate constitution of the House of Commons. Mr Eric Heffer's perfectly reasonable defiance of his leader's prohibition against ministers speaking against the "government" in Parliament is further evidence of the seriousness of the situation now created. Of

course, no ministers ought to be in a position to speak against a government's collective decision, but if they are licensed to do so in the count it is outrageous that Mr Wilson should try to muzzle them, the House of Commons.

It is also clear that Mr Wilson is not simply willing to risk destruction of the old centre of collective Cabinet responsibility. He has also created a situation which undermines the convention by which each individual minister is responsible and specifically responsible to the House of Commons for policy of his own department in the longer run, this could even more damaging than a threat to collective responsibility.

Although the breach in collective responsibility more fully understood as a nonsense Government, it is surely incredible that the principle is not restored by the administration. All Mr Wilson has done here is to show how he has done it in the much in done in 1932, precedent) breaching collective responsibility does not work.

But the responsibility of individual ministers is another matter, because it touches one of the basic powers of the House of Commons—its tension between the political minister who knows what he is elected party want and officials who believe they know what the facts dictate.

The truth is that Government departments have policy and the fact that changes such departmental policies begin with changes of minister does not diminish the fact.

The Foreign Office, for example, after being opposed by the House of Commons to the arrival of the Maclean Government, a strongly EEC position, which has been relevant to the post adopted by subsequent ministers.

Similarly, education policy had a strong departmental responsibility to the House of Commons. But what Whitehall has long had its own broad policy positions, and it is not to be mentioned that the policies of one sort or another, which have been stable and clear to ministers and the public.

It is true that a first minister with a clear political drive can override his department's policies or the line which is based on Whitehall view of the facts.

But, of course, the "expansion" of a department's responsibilities to the public is clearly defined by officials, through the minister to Parliament. It is this that Mr Wilson threatens to undermine by decision to transfer parliamentarianism away from a minister who cannot within terms of his licence of science, honestly give a "neutral" or sufficiently "government" answer.

Yet in the case of Department of Industry, for example, Mr Wilson is apparently prepared to give the services of the department to independent role to conciliate "neutral" answers or to give them a role which require them to respond not to their own ministers (who alone answer for them in Parliament) but to other ministers, or to the Prime Minister, or the Treasury—or so body.

What does this do to relationship of department officials to their minister? What is it to happen where the official minister agree on a political statement to the dissatisfaction of the "government" majority?

It is important to know that the Parliamentary Government has no right to policy without individual ministerial responsibility to House of Commons—and it is this that Mr Wilson is seriously destroying.

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Margaret, Duchess of Argyll, is making sure nobody misses the fact that she is opening her Upper Grosvenor Street house to the public this year. Her dispute about it with her husband has already been publicized up Whitehall.

The £7.50 tour, in groups of up to 30, will include a personal meeting with the 62-year-old Duchess, once a noted beauty. Visitors will be greeted by the elderly red-headed butler and at the end of the tour, drink as much champagne as they can handle on the stone-flagged terrace, or in the panelled dining room where such as Marie Oberon, Marlene Dietrich, Paul Getty and I have been entertained.

Several ambassadors had been invited to yesterday's do and some turned up (Switzerland, Sweden, Turkey and Norway were four that I spotted). I very one was disappointed that the Chinese ambassador, who had accepted the invitation, did not make it and neither did the Japanese whose country might be expected to provide some of the Duchess's customers.

She is going into it in a businesslike way. She has a business manager—Vincent Shaw, who also handles Sotheby's—and members of his staff showed visitors round. It is an eighteenth-century town house of modest proportions, precisely done up.

One of the highlights is the bathroom—a large carpeted

The Times Diary

Champagne with the Duchess: \$18

space where the bath is the least obtrusive object and where the lavatory has built-in arm-cabinets and a mirror.

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collected edition of his books. He said the 19th century was the most humanitarian age in history and that he had read novels than ever were read. "That was no accident," he said. "Today we seem to be relapsing back into tyranny, barbarism and violence."

Before the lunch John Braine engaged Mary Wilson in earnest conversation about poetry. They found they shared the same tastes—both like poetry that rhymes. Mrs Wilson refused to be drawn on the Common Market but she said she was still writing poetry and one day might publish another volume of her work. The poems would rhyme.

Too lavish, she thought, so what? Besides, Boerhaave was finally treated to a simple grilled plaice, a cheese omelette, salad and fresh fruit. One of her criteria is that she will not offer guests any creature that has been fed with imported grain—which is why chicken was out.

The method has its contradictions. How, for instance, does she reconcile herself to the eggs in the omelette? Still, it is a conscientious gesture by Mrs Hart, who says: "Government Hospitality are very good about it. They put up with a lot."

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LABOUR DIVIDES ON EUROPE

The three-day debate on Europe which ended in a vote last night showed most clearly that the Labour Party is completely split on the European issue. This is a matter for regret. Britain would be able to take greater advantage of continued membership of the European Community if the governing party were united behind it. The Government also faces such difficult decisions in other areas of policy that this open disunity is a serious weakness.

The differences on Europe have created a great strain because the device of the referendum has forced the division of opinion into the open. The Labour Party is however equally divided on the question of economic policy. On economic policy there are two views which may for convenience be called the Social Democratic and the Socialist. The Social Democrats, who certainly include all the members of the Cabinet who want to join the European Community, want to make the mixed economy work. They want to change the present social and industrial system by evolutionary means, but they want to preserve the prosperity of the country while they do it, and they do not aim at revolution.

The Socialists, and those Social Democrats like Mr. Benn who play in with the Socialists, do not have any confidence in the future of the mixed economy in its present form. They include people who would be glad to see the whole structure broken down so that it could be rebuilt and more moderate people who only want to see radical change; they include revolutionaries, pseudo revolutionaries and some radicals.

The Social Democrats regard the present inflation as highly dangerous both to our economy and to our society. On all the issues related to inflation they take the anti-inflationary side.

Of course they do not want to see higher unemployment, but they are opposed to deflation which they think would be a dangerous and ineffective way of trying to bring unemployment down. They are concerned at the increase in government spending and would like to bring it under better control. They are extremely concerned at the size of the Budget deficit and would like to see it reduced. They are determined to keep control over the money supply, and are anxious to secure an improvement in the balance of payments.

The Socialists do not agree with the Social Democrats on any of these points. They would inflame still further in the hope of reducing unemployment. They are prepared to contemplate enormous increases in government expenditure. They regard the budget deficit as a matter of little importance. They do not care about the rules for running a mixed economy because they do not care about the future of the mixed economy.

Most of the Social Democrats do not believe that a return to a statutory incomes policy, such as was practised by both the last Labour and the last Conservative governments, is politically practicable. There is no majority for it in the present House of Commons. Yet they are horrified by the spectre of rapid British wage inflation with thirty per cent settlements in major public industries, contrasted with the slowing of wage inflation in most other countries in the world. They do not have great confidence in the social contract but they at least want it to be interpreted as strictly as possible.

The Socialists depend for their political strength on the militants in the trade unions and are at least accomplices in promoting wage inflation. Many of them seem to believe that inflation will

bring the socialist society nearer either by redistributing wealth or by so wrecking the present system that it has to be rebuilt on socialist lines. They take offence at any attempt to make the social contract mean anything.

These two groups have co-existed in the Labour Party for a very long time; they have both needed each other in order to obtain power, and that has normally made them tolerate each other. There are however two factors which make 1975 a particularly difficult year in which to maintain that tolerance. The first is the referendum itself; it has already destroyed the formal political unity of the Labour Party and has destroyed with it many of the conventions which help to keep a party together. The second is the extreme seriousness of the economic situation. Any of a number of events, including a negative vote in the referendum, a war in the Middle East or a major economic change in the United States could turn the slow burning economic crisis into an explosive one.

Mr. Wilson has enormous skill in holding his party together but even that cuts both ways. Mr. Wilson has prevented the Labour Party resolving its disputes during his time as leader; he has preferred unity to decision. The result is that a great pressure has built up which naturally seeks an outlet.

The Labour Party is always about to split, but it hardly ever does. One should always give extra weight to this desire to hold together when the logic seems to point to falling apart. Yet now, with the left in the majority in the TUC, in the Party Executive, in the Party Conference, and so strong in crucial votes in the House, one may wonder how long they will accept Europe or no Europe, the policies of the Social Democratic majority in the Cabinet.

UNDER THE MINISTER'S THUMB

Enough lessons have been learnt in the past twenty-five years with the operation of nationalised enterprises to make some expectation that a minister seeking parliamentary approval for a new statutory commercial undertaking would draw deeply on past experience. By any standards, Mr. Varley's British National Oil Corporation, to be created by the Petroleum and Submarine Pipe-lines Bill, published yesterday, does not offer anything new by way of state financial institutions, let alone any reforms. The Bill is an unimpressive document as likely to attract criticism from Government supporters as from opponents.

Even a cursory reading confirms that the Secretary of State for Energy proposes that Labour's once ambitiously conceived state oil agency will be firmly under his department's control. The Secretary of State's powers of direction and veto are such that they could have the clear result of stifling any hopes that the new oil corporation would display independent commercial-style management.

Public participation in Britain's offshore oil industry had probably become inevitable and Mr. Varley is only fulfilling an electoral pledge. Yet the Bill's imposing title is more impressive than the details of the enabling legislation on the basis of which the BNOC will be required to match the flair and enthusiasm displayed by other enterprises exploiting the oil and gas resources of the Celtic and North Seas. Indeed, it is ironic that the corporation will start its life by annexing the pro-

table part of another state concern, the offshore interests of the National Coal Board, whose own "problem" was, however, exacerbated by indecisive ministerial involvement over the years.

The Secretary of State's ideas for our newest nationalised undertaking are also dominated by political rather than commercial considerations. Its board must include two civil servants, and geographical experience rather than knowledge of the industry seems to be a deciding factor for the appointment of other members. Once the board is appointed the corporation cannot look forward to commercial freedom for the members may not frame any plan or budget without Mr. Varley's consent, and indeed will be called upon to report more regularly than most state enterprises on their activities. In writing up or acquiring subsidiaries, the board must obtain Government consent which also requires for all loans and guarantees. Exploration or production outside British waters are forbidden without ministerial approval, as are refining and trading in oil products.

The Bill also requires the BNOC to notify the Government before it enters into any new activity or a substantial expansion of an existing activity. All its borrowing will be supervised by the department and the Treasury and any net earnings will be transferred into a new National Oil Account into which private North Sea operators pay their petroleum revenue taxes,

from which the state concern itself will be exempt. Any appointment to a subsidiary must have Mr. Varley's approval.

Since Mr. Varley proposes to control refinery development and tighten up licensing controls, BNOC, which will also have to co-exist with the British Gas Corporation and the partly state-owned BP and Barmah Oil Companies, seems certain to face unnecessary frustrations in trying to manage its affairs. For all the talk of a new kind of state body, Mr. Varley might just as well have decided to place the oil corporation inside his own department's headquarters, for on the terms published yesterday the minister will surely be the effective master. Is this what Labour's pre-election planning for the rapid and fairly shared development of North Sea resources was really about?

Even at this late stage it is right to ask, at a time when offshore costs are rising so fast and technical delays are proving even more serious, whether a ministerial puppet of this sort is relevant to the need urgently to find and exploit our oil. The Opposition and the oil companies do not find much reassurance in the Bill and are repeating their well rehearsed, if justified, anxieties. But they may observe that in his anxiety to write in so many conditions and require so many consents, Mr. Varley may well have made it easy for some future Secretary of State for Energy effectively to turn the BNOC into a different creature, without even the need for new legislation.

A new economic order

From Mr. Brian W. Walker
Sir, A year ago (April 9) the United Nations General Assembly met in special session to consider the implications of a major shift in world economic power resulting from dramatic increases in the cost of raw materials including oil. The assembly approved an emergency programme to help those countries most seriously affected and adopted a declaration on the establishment of a "new international economic order".

It is worth looking at the past 12 months to see how this new economic order—dismissed by some as empty verbiage—is turning out to be translated from words to reality.

In the first place, Britain's Commonwealth has been instrumental in leading the European Community into a new style relationship with 46 developing countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. The Lomé Convention, signed a month ago, breaks down some important barriers enshrined by the western powers in the old system of trade and payments for their own advantage. In the case of sugar, it concedes the key principle of indexing to protect the cane producers' terms of trade and it offers protection against foreign exchange fluctuations. More importantly, the Convention commits the EEC to compensating producers of a dozen basic commodities if their export earnings drop by more than a small amount.

of the Lomé Convention is that it has changed the rules and set precedents which, in future, negotiations will be expected to follow and, indeed, Mrs. Judith Hart, our Minister for Overseas Development, told Parliament she hoped it would "contribute towards a new international order in the relationship between the industrialized and developing countries".

Secondly, to achieve a unified approach to export policy on raw materials, more than 100 developing countries met in Dakar in February. And if that conjured up the spectre of more Opec-style cartels, the British government wasted no time in trying to get the genie back in the bottle. The Prime Minister announced a plan to stabilize world commodity prices in some way that will give the producers fair returns and assured markets—a plan which will be presented to the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' meeting in Jamaica later this month.

The reality—as the EEC has recognized implicitly in the Lomé Convention—is that our livelihoods and our well-being are inextricably bound up with those of the people in developing countries who have hitherto provided the raw materials of our prosperity on the cheap. This is the reality behind that cumbersome word interdependence. It means that the new international economic order must be one that shares its benefits equally among all.

This has been acknowledged publicly by the heads of state of the Opec countries (which "control" a mere shadow of our western industrial/technological one). In a statement published recently in your columns, these 14 countries affirmed that "the problem of the financial

resources of both the Opec member countries and the developed countries, as well as the technological ability of the latter for the furtherance of the economy of the developing countries would substantially help in solving the international economic crisis".

So the signposts are there, all pointing to a process of profound realignment in the world's financial and trading system: a process which has gathered significant momentum since the U.N. Special Session a year ago. It is important whether we agree that these changes so far add up to a new economic order. What matters is that everyone—not only those like us in the developed agencies or government—should be aware that this new order is in the making and understand why. Because we have only two choices; either we can accept the challenge and share in building our future world, or, fearing the unknown, we can be left behind with our heads in the sand.

Yours faithfully,
BRIAN W. WALKER, Director,
Oxfam,
274 Banbury Road,
Oxford,
April 7

Personally speaking

From Mrs Rosamund Bruce
Sir, As an anachronistic housewife, I should like to be known from now on as a housewife.
Yours faithfully,
ROSAMUND BRUCE,
9 Rishelaw Road,
Edinburgh.
April 5.

Airlift of Vietnamese orphans

From Dr Gerald Griffin
Sir, Your leading article of today (April 9) and the letter yesterday by Patricia Penn both suggest that for Vietnamese orphans the alternative of being brought up in their own culture, even in an institution, is better than being adopted and reared in an alien country.

May 1, as one of the doctors who went to Saigon last week on the Daily Mail flight, point out that as far as the children were brought back are concerned, these were not the alternatives.

For many of them, in fact, the choice was between continuing medical neglect and almost certain death in a few days or the chance of life itself by being brought to Britain.

In recent years, we have lived through Biafra, Bangladesh and Ethiopia where, for the most part, public opinion was only fully alerted after disaster had occurred and children were dying in hundreds or thousands.

The tragedy of Vietnam as far as the children are concerned has not yet reached the appalling proportions of these previous disasters.

But disaster is imminent. In Saigon, we found terribly ill, and terribly afraid children, because the orphans were not taken there was only one worker to look after up to 60 infants. There is not enough help or facilities to cope with the very weak and the very sick. The children are in danger.

We felt that at least six of them must have died and ten more probably would have died if left in their "natural environment". These children are alive today because the Government of Vietnam gave them to the orphans brought them back to Britain where they are receiving medical care. It is interesting that we also brought back several older children who had already been to England three years ago for rehabilitation and returned to their orphanages in Vietnam some time ago. They too, were at risk under the present conditions.

We found quickly that the ill became contented and the others were happy and at home in the peculiarly varied population of the place.

We were entirely surprised by the size of the reception at Heathrow. But this was due to the enormous public interest aroused by the flight. The proof of this is the tremendous financial support that the Daily Mail has received for its Vietnam Orphans Fund. I understand that the money will go not only to the orphans here but to the orphanages in Vietnam itself.

The Kurdish refugees

From Mr Philip Noel-Baker and others

Sir, The plight of the Kurdish refugees of Iran and Iraq is one which should cause the international community considerable concern. Both Tehran and Baghdad are refusing access to international humanitarian organizations which must raise doubts as to whether the terms of the Geneva Convention are being adhered to. One of the main principles of this Convention is that a country receiving refugees cannot repatriate them against their will.

The Kurds fear the Iranians may be ready to return refugees wanted by the Iraqi Government for their role in the Kurdish conflict. As long as the Iranians refuse neutral observers permission to enter their refugee camps, these fears are bound to exist. The refugees in Iran, whose movement is already restricted, are also worried that they will be dispersed throughout the country.

The Iranians appear so far to have treated their new refugee population with generosity and humanity. They have shown a readiness to allow the Kurds to maintain their cultural identity and to preserve their religious freedom. The Kurds who have been displaced by the conflict are in a desperate situation. For this reason the sudden restrictions imposed on international organizations seems all the more inexplicable and calls for concern.

Baghdad has also refused the International Red Cross (IRC) access to Iraqi Kurdistan to assess the refugee situation. Iraq has an international duty, not only to act in a humanitarian fashion, but to be seen to do so. This is the only way the accusations which will perhaps be without foundation, that it is creating its Kurdish population inhumanely. It has nothing to lose by allowing neutral observers in to supervise aid distribution and medical care. International organizations could

I feel that the debate over this is now clouded by the emotive issues: the political opposition to the "hamburger and cake" concept of the vast American airlift, the differing procedures of the many charitable organizations involved in Vietnam and perhaps most important of all, the "post hoc" observations of those parties interested in the tremendous political publicity to be obtained over this situation.

I suggest, Sir, that the Daily Mail project, backed by the three relief organizations on the plane, was a wonderful and humanitarian venture. It saved the lives of at least sixteen children.

Yours faithfully,
GERALD GRIFFIN,
44 Holbrook Lane,
Chislehurst, Kent,
April 9.

From Dr Joan K. McMichael

Sir, Your correspondent, Julian Bion (April 8), asks if the Vietnamese children fathered by American soldiers are in danger. The same question has been raised with the British Medical Aid Committee for Vietnam on previous occasions, more specifically in connection with the children of United States Negro soldiers.

We therefore approached Dr. Loc, the representative of the Ministry of Health with the Provisional Revolutionary Government delegation in Paris. He made the point that this was not the first time the Vietnamese had faced a similar problem. Following the withdrawal of the French occupation forces after the Geneva Agreement in 1954, there were many children fathered by black French colonial troops. The Vietnamese have a well known and traditional attitude of great affection for children and these children were not only not discriminated against, but rather, additional care and consideration was given them because of the difficulties involved in their particular circumstances.

There appears to be no reason to fear any change in official policy and therefore no need to uproot these children from all they know and understand. The evacuation to strange and distant countries.

Meanwhile, the crucial question remains—the urgent need for food, shelter and medical supplies for all the children of Vietnam who have lived through the experiences of this long and terrible war.

Yours faithfully,
JOAN K. McMICHAEL, Secretary,
Medical Aid Committee for Vietnam,
20 Bedford Square,
36 Wellington Street, WC2,
April 8.

fulfil a valuable role in helping to alleviate the distress resulting from a war situation. During the year-long conflict between the Kurds and the Iraqis, the Kurds were allowed to inspect the Kurdish POW camp and talk to Iraqi prisoners. The Iraqi Government has also a duty to provide the same facilities for IRC personnel visiting Kurdish prisoners held by the Iraqi authorities.

Another problem is the position of about 3,000 Kurds—either students or qualified academics—who want to continue their studies in the West, but who are without valid travel documents. Most have out of date passports and could experience difficulty even in leaving Iran. West European governments could provide invaluable assistance by accepting them as political refugees and providing them with an opportunity to continue their studies.

The UNHCR for Refugees is also ideally placed to provide these people with the necessary travel documents and funds.

The Kurdish problem has attracted much publicity recently in the West. But the West, and in particular the British Government, have tended to ignore the plight of these unfortunate war victims. The least it can do is to adopt a sympathetic approach towards the Kurds who want to study or live in this country, while urging both Iraq and Iran to treat the Kurds with humanity and to allow a lawful access to the International Red Cross.

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP NOEL-BAKER,
TREVOR HUDDLESTON, CR,
RUSSELL JOHNSTON,
SOPER,
MERVYN SOUTHWARK,
Centre for Human Rights and Responsibilities,
Nassau House,
4 Millbank, SW1,
April 4.

Artists and VAT

From the Chairman of the Arts Council of Great Britain

Sir, The possibility, referred to yesterday in your columns by the Chairman of the Society of London Art Dealers, that the Chancellor may be about to relieve the theatre of VAT, is a hope that at the moment is sustaining all who work for the arts. It will be a major disappointment if this is not done.

But I would like also to reiterate my conviction that the living artist has just as strong a case for zero-rating. State support for the performing arts, though small by comparison with what is needed or with what is done in some continental countries, is large compared with what can be done directly to help individual creative artists. The least the state can do is to relieve them of the burden of VAT.

Yours faithfully,
GIBSON,
105 Piccadilly, W1.

Trade union politics

From Professor D. F. Laiden

Sir, The roles of trade unions in western capitalist society had in the Soviet Union have been sharply contrasted by your correspondent, Professor Roberts (letter, April 3). It is reasonable to assume that the subordinate position of the trade unions as organs of the state in the Soviet Union has not failed to

impress itself upon Mr. Len Murray and his colleagues, who will accordingly be in no hurry to move towards a socialist society within which their power would be a pale phantom of its frightening capitalist self.

The fact is that the union leadership has developed a great vested interest in capitalism as have the employers and, in the absence of interference by government acting on behalf of us weaker brethren, will cheerfully act in collusion with them in the division of the national cake, gaining higher wages for their members which we then pay for through higher prices.

The trade union movement is not (as it frequently claims) a progressive but a reactionary and anarchic force within our society. Any progress we may attempt to make from the present capitalist imbroglio towards a juster arrangement of our affairs will undoubtedly be stoutly resisted by a clique which has fought its way into a supreme position of power under the presently accepted rules of the game.

Thus, it is not unexpected that any proposal that workers should be given representation upon boards and should accept some management responsibility is not received with enthusiasm; factory communes can expect an equally cool reception. Why change the rules when you're winning.
Yours truly,
D. F. LAIDEN,
The University of Aston in Birmingham,
Gosta Green, Birmingham.

Local government: problem of finance

From Mr Arthur Seldon

Sir, After a run of leaders that reflect mastery of their subjects, your appraisal of local government financing (April 5) is disappointing. Its concentration on the macro-economic approach makes it vulnerable on three counts.

First, it speaks of local government "basic public services" without distinguishing between public goods, from which individuals cannot be excluded and for which they cannot be charged, and personal goods. Second, the appraisal seems to suppose that none of the services now run by local government can, or should, be put into the market. Third, in considering "local sources of income" it does not examine charging as an alternative to rates and a local income tax.

Since the early 1960s the Institute has initiated (and published) some 30 studies in the financing and/or pricing of housing, medical care, libraries, education, transport, parking, water, fire fighting, refuse collection, seaside facilities and police and a study of sports facilities is in hand. For the first time for decades the stringency of local government revenue and its implications for local autonomy have opened men's minds to methods of financing that have hitherto been neglected. And it is to its credit that the Layfield Committee has not excluded the possible scope for making local services more self-financing by placing them on a more commercial footing.

There is the danger that charging will be rejected on three inadequate grounds. First, the conventional objection that pricing bears more harshly on lower than on higher incomes is happily being eroded by the closer attention recent Conservative and Labour Governments have been giving to embryo forms of

a reverse (negative) income tax in topping up low incomes. Second, the criticism of "administrative impracticability" that must be anticipated from the officials should not be accepted without sceptical scrutiny. Third, the perennial objection of "political impossibility" should, on the evidence of IEA field surveys, be treated with no less or a scepticism.

You say that none of the alternatives to rates and local income tax is a "substantial" return. The difference between pricing and taxation is that taxing has no direct effect on the scale and costs of government services. The function are paid for is not only to provide their revenue but also to enjoy the benefits: it would encourage more reflection before consumption and more caution before production. It would cause both suppliers and users to think twice in the knowledge of costs. It would thus reduce the total costs of local government services.

Happily understanding of the market mechanism and of market pricing has been spreading in all schools of thought and in all parties, and the experience of no-pricing or underpricing in central as well as local government services. Perhaps the Layfield Committee will be the first major enquiry to put administrative objections and political prejudices in their place second economic reason and the urgencies of the hour. We must now expect pricing and charging to be discussed increasingly in local government financing as well as rating and taxing.

Yours faithfully,
ARTHUR SELDON,
Editorial Director, Institute of Economic Affairs,
2 Lord North Street,
Westminster, SW1,
April 9.

Advantages of reorganization

From the Leader of Kent County Council

Sir, We in local government must learn to be grateful for small mercies and I welcome the moderate tone of Christopher Warman's account of the present problems of local government (April 7). I cannot, however, accept his two main assertions that it will be the reorganization at the wrong time.

There are very real advantages to be gained from the unitary system in the right circumstances. The right circumstances are restricted to geographically compact and cohesive areas. An analysis of the distribution of population in England and Wales will show that in fact there are large areas of the country where these circumstances do not exist.

When this fact is related to an assessment of optimum size for the different services provided by local government, it should be plain to any objective and knowledgeable observer that the country could not have been carved up into a satisfactory pattern of all purpose authorities without diminishing the "local" element in local government to an extent that would have been quite unacceptable politically.

As to the question of timing, our critics seem to be losing sight of the fact that local government reorganization has been in contemplation ever since the war and that when Crossman set up the Royal Commission the inevitability of change had been accepted. The only issue was the form of change. After the Commission reported, it became essential to kill the uncertainty. That Peter Walker had the courage to undertake the reform that inevitably was going to be unpopular with the vested interests affected, is, I think, very much to his credit and that of my party.

Militant motorists

From Lord Houghton of Sowerby, CH

Sir, Postbag democracy is a dangerous thing. The Automobile Association has little else to go by.

How can the AA claim to "represent the motorist" when it has no constitutional provision for consultation, debate, or democratic decision? It is ruled by an all-male oligarchy: self-perpetuating; never elected.

When the Director General advances (April 4) a highly debatable economic proposition I question his credentials. He leaves all and sundry under the misapprehension that the government "firmly believes" that much of our economic troubles are due to poor road transport communications.

Is this the outcome of postbag democracy or of committee autocracy? What evidence is there, either of the validity of the first belief or of the weight of opinion behind it?

I have had occasion to put similar questions before, when I was chairman of the Cabinet Committee on the introduction of the breathalyzer in 1955-56. They are just as relevant today.

I am, Sir, yours, etc,
HOUGHTON OF SOWERBY,
House of Lords,
April 5.

Journalists' closed shop

From the Editor of New Scientist

Sir, I would ask those who are urging the case for a journalists' closed shop in its more extreme, and thus dangerous, form to consider the implications of such a policy for a semi-specialist publication like New Scientist. We have a hybrid audience, ranging from working scientists to politicians, from schoolchildren to businessmen. Our aim is one of cross-fertilization, between scientists of different disciplines and between scientists and non-scientists. We sell just under 70,000 copies weekly and our readership is many times that figure. At a time when there has never been a greater need to ventilate the practical implications of scientific development, I take it that we are fulfilling a worthwhile purpose.

Yet, if a closed shop in its more rigid form—or even one with minor concessions "allowing us to publish occasional 'outside contributions'"—were to operate, the very exist-

ence of New Scientist would be threatened. An essential and substantial component of the magazine consists of articles written by scientists about their work and by politicians and other spare time and occasional writers. Few if any of these authors would be either willing or able to join the National Union of Journalists. New Scientist would cease to exist. Can it be said that the interests of the public function would be gravely impaired. Inevitably, this letter may appear in some quarters as an apology for our magazine. It is not intended as such. My argument is applicable to many other semi-specialist publications whose authors' interests in this matter the NUJ is so misguidedly seeking to protect.

Yours faithfully,
BERNARD DIXON, Editor,
New Scientist,
128 Long Acce, WC2.

1. Public expectations have not diminished with reorganization and some of the problems shown few signs of lessening its demands for improvements in services.

2. Unfortunately local authorities by their reticence have contributed to their own problems. Rates (whatever their disadvantages as a tax) are the only source of money for local government is not extravagant—local authorities should do more to bring these facts home to the public and not simply react to criticism.

The Local Government Act, 1972, may not have provided all the right answers, but it has provided a framework which, if properly used and understood by members, should enable them to deal more effectively with the problems of local government. It would have been a miracle if it had. It has, however, given local government a rational framework which, if properly used and understood by members, should enable them to deal more effectively with the problems of local government. It would have been a miracle if it had. It has, however, given local government a rational framework which, if properly used and understood by members, should enable them to deal more effectively with the problems of local government.


Weather portents

From Dr Michael Lowewe

Sir, Let our lords and masters beware and take heed of the wisdom of ancient China. Freaks of weather, we are taught, were one of the measures whereby a beneficent Heaven warned an Emperor or his government of the error of their ways. Should these authorities disregard such warnings, disaster would follow as surely as the night follows the day.


Chinese observers reported freak falls of snow, hail or frost for the spring of the years 144, 131, 66, 43 and 29 BC. The historians noted these phenomena and reported the subsequent events, leaving the reader to draw his own inferences. These consequences included an invasion of north China by the barbarian Hsiao-nu (144); the start of 30 years of warfare with these same barbarians (131); sedition and the subsequent annihilation of one of the foremost families of the land (66); the execution of the eunuch Shih Hsien who had possessed himself of tyrannical power (43); and the impachment of the Empress for practising black magic (29).


Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL LOWEWE,
University of Cambridge,
Faculty of Oriental Studies,
Sidgwick Avenue, Cambridge.




MARLEY

**£14,000,000
CASH
AVAILABILITY**

 Marley Ltd. has negotiated a commitment from Barclays Bank Ltd. to provide £10 millions. if and when required, for a period of five years from April, 1975. This is in addition to available U.K. overratt facilities totalling £4 millions. These funds will be used to implement growth plans over the next five years and to maintain the company's relatively strong financial position during a possible period of extended inflation.

 U.K. cash flow estimates show that the new facilities should comfortably exceed requirements. A low point will be reached at the end of 1975, continuing into early 1976. Recovery is then indicated with the beginning of a sustained period of growth in Marley's business, particularly if world inflation recedes during subsequent years.

 These increased U.K. borrowings, plus further borrowings by overseas subsidiaries, are estimated to leave the group indebtedness at not more than 30% of total capital employed in 1978, compared with 24% at 31 October 1974.

Estimate up for this year's GDP

Higher growth than previously expected, mainly because of upward revisions of consumption, is the main change shown by this month's comparison of the National Institute of Economic and Social Research's latest estimate of gross domestic product to rise this year by 2.4 per cent, compared with 1.6 per cent in its previous forecast.

An increase in consumption expected to amount to 2.2 per cent against a reduction of 0.3 per cent in the previous forecast is reflected in the higher figure, which is despite a sharp downward revision of the private investment forecast.

The contrast between the Henley Centre, dataSTREAM and Phillips and Drew, and the NIESR forecast probably reflects the policy unchanged assumption adopted by NIESR. It would suggest that most of the private forecasters are expecting a deflationary Budget.

Rival offer for Aston still possible

By Edward Townsend

A final decision is expected to be taken today or tomorrow by the board of Company Development, the Solihull investment concern which owns Aston Martin Lagonda, on the £1,050,000 takeover offer for the car company.

The success of the offer, the fifth made by a consortium of American, Canadian and British businessmen, hinges on acceptance by Company Development.

Aston's debenture holder, after approval from an informal committee of creditors, this approval, despite the fact that unsecured creditors will be paid only 10p in the pound, seems likely to persuade Company Development to accept, even though Mr Michael Clarke, the Aston receiver, and Mr William Willson, chairman of CD and Aston, consider the offer to be inadequate.

Mr Clarke said yesterday that a professional evaluation of Aston Martin had conservatively estimated the company to be worth more than £2m as a going concern and £1.4m if broken up.

He said that after paying the debenture holder £500,000 and the £210,000 already realized through the sale of cars in stock, the present offer left £340,000 for the company's assets "and that is definitely inadequate".

However, if the parent company accepted the offer, there would still be time for rival bids to be made. Mr Clarke said he was still expecting an offer from an unnamed group of British businessmen.

FORECASTS FOR THE BRITISH ECONOMY

Percentage increase	NIESR (Feb)	LBS (Apr)	Year 1975/Year 1974 (Apr)	HSG (Apr)	P&D (Apr)	1st half Treasury (Nov)	2nd half NIESR (Feb)	1974 LBS (Dec)
Consumption	2.2	0.1	1.1	0.6	1.1	3.4	2.1	-0.8
Private investment inc housebuilding	-7.0	-6.3	-6.5	-5.9	-6.1	-3.5	-8.1	-9.0
Public investment inc housebuilding	6.4	-0.2	2.2	4.9	6.0	5.3	14.7	5.7
Public authorities' consumption	3.0	2.7	1.1	2.5	3.3	2.0	3.5	2.4
Exports	1.2	3.2	1.4	3.3	2.2	7.1	1.6	4.2
Imports	0.5	0.2	-2.3	-1.4	2.2	8.8	0.0	0.2
Stockbuilding (£m)	264	94	-120	61	20	300	320	162
Gross domestic product after adjustment to factor cost	2.4	1.9	0.7	1.1	1.0	2.6	1.8	-0.4
Inflation forecast	20	over 20	20.1	18.7	18.4	—	—	—
Balance of payments — current account	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
deficit (£m) Year	2,737	over 3,000	2,700	1,743	2,360	—	3,194	—

NIESR National Institute of Economic and Social Research
LBS London Business School
H Henley Centre
HSG Hoare & Co. Govett, as provided by dataSTREAM
P&D Phillips & Drew

All forecasts are constant prices. Seasonally adjusted and at annual rates. The stockbuilding and balance of payments forecasts in the first half 1975/2nd half 1974 section are forecasts for the first half of 1975 multiplied by two. The forecasts by the Treasury, the NIESR and LBS are based on the assumption of unchanged policies. The forecasts by H, HSG and P&D assume changes in policy. For details readers should refer to original sources. Forecasts in different forecasts are not completely comparable, but differences are minor. Differences in results also reflect differences in assumptions, model constructions and date at which work was performed. The month in which work was published is given in brackets. The Treasury publishes its forecasts with the Financial Statement and Budget Report, which usually appears once a year. NIESR and LBS revise their forecasts every quarter. H, HSG and P&D revise their forecasts every month.

Shipowners facing crisis over demand

By Michael Bailey
Shipping Correspondent

World shipping and shipbuilding could be facing its "moment of truth" this summer, Mr Robert Huskisson, chairman of Lloyd's Register of Shipping, said yesterday.

This is when owners will have to decide whether to cancel or maintain orders for delivery in 1977-78; and the number of cancellations, which has so far been "quite small", could "change dramatically" in the next few months if the world recession accelerates.

There will probably be more shipbuilding cancellations, certainly fewer orders, and some falling off in shipping demand, particularly for large tankers, possibly for some time. Mr Huskisson said in the society's latest annual report. The VLCC will be less in demand and the days

of the ULCC may be numbered.

The figures suggest that the depressed state of world trade could no longer support a 10 per cent annual growth in the world fleet and already there is some slowing down in construction schedules, Mr Huskisson said. But there will continue to be a general requirement for large numbers of a wide variety of ships—medium-sized tankers of 150,000 tons or so and bulk-carriers of the same size, products carriers, dry cargo ships and all sorts of specialized vessels—and the broad view is one of "cautious optimism".

Orders last year fell to their lowest level since 1968, the report discloses with an almost total absence of large tanker orders in the second half of the year. The only real demand for large crude carriers came from Arab countries.

More tour operators given annual air travel licences

Names of 22 tour operators who have been granted annual 'Air Travel Organisers' Licences have been announced by the Civil Aviation Authority.

This brings the total of licence renewals to 32 since last week's CAA announcement that 117 tour operators had failed to meet the March 31 renewal deadline.

The 22 companies are: Dixon Travel Agency, Bards Travel Service, Bales Tours, Martlet Travel, Kenning Travel, Express, Boyd, Rounding Lambert, Blacks Travel Agency, Almeria Holidays and Villas, Agneta Club, European, Trafalgar Travel, Eastways Travel Services (London), Algarve Villas, Preston Travel, Hosts, Comours, Golf Villa Holidays, Silfrail Holidays, Travel Tickets, VST Travel, Britalia Travel.

Pay rising faster than house prices

By Margaret Stone

House prices are continuing to move upwards, but more slowly than earnings, the retail price index and house building costs, according to the survey of house prices published yesterday by the Nationwide Building Society.

The indices for the first quarter of 1975 show a rise of 2 per cent for new and modern second-hand houses and of 3 per cent for older properties.

The increasing fear among building society leaders that more easily available mortgages might trigger another house price spiral was echoed yesterday by Sir Stanley Morton, chairman of the Abbey National. He said that a monitoring system for house prices would be needed to prevent this.

BSC saving £60m on ferrous scrap

A further cut in the price of good quality ferrous scrap, the fourth in 11 weeks, was announced last night by the British Scrap Federation.

The reduction, from midnight, of 22 a tonne brings the price to £24 per tonne and means that scrap prices have fallen by 31 per cent in 11 weeks.

Almost half of the nation's steel is made from scrap and the fall in price represents a big saving to the British Steel Corporation, estimated by one source yesterday at £60 million.

Lower grades of scrap are also down by about £10 a tonne.

Fed report sees signs of recovery in economy

From Frank Vogt
Washington, April 9

New York Federal Reserve Bank says there is a possibility that the continuing contraction of the United States economy may finally be coming to an end; but it stresses in its latest report that "while an economic upturn is in prospect, its timing and magnitude are still in question".

The Fed maintains that the dominant depressant in recent months has been liquidation of inventories, which has sharply reduced industrial output and increased unemployment.

Many industries are now working well below full capacity, but the Fed's economists point out that demand has been relatively stable and because of the already huge reduction in business stocks "one would expect a restoration of orders to manufacturers in the near future and eventually a higher rate of industrial production".

One critical factor stressed is that business investments in the past couple of years have significantly increased industrial capacity and thus despite a possible upswing in output "slack in (plant) utilization may persist for a time".

Continuing slack in factory utilization encourages the Fed to believe that a check will continue on inflationary pressures.

The Fed is also optimistic that significant declines in consumer prices may be seen before long. Here it notes that it is significant that "over the past six months industrial commodity prices have increased at a 6.5 per cent annual rate, well below the 31.5 per cent advance posted over the first half of 1974".

Another encouraging sign is the rapidly increasing inflow of net new savings which the Fed believes could eventually lead to a recovery in residential construction.

The report adds that the latest tax cuts should have an important impact on stimulating the economy, but that there is a grave danger that these temporary tax reductions may become permanent, producing substantial inflationary pressures.

On monetary policies the report emphasizes that the Fed has made strong efforts to increase the money supply in the last few months, which according to preliminary data resulted in a rise in the four weeks to March 26 at an annual rate of 14.7 per cent, while M2 rose at a seasonally adjusted 13 per cent.

Money market developments today suggested the Fed is now being more cautious in its policy, the markets pumping in fresh cash.

Accountants criticize wealth tax

By Business News Staff

A big attack on the proposed wealth tax in its suggested form was launched yesterday by the accountancy bodies in the United Kingdom who have made representations to the House of Commons select committee on the proposed wealth tax.

The bodies are greatly concerned about imposing yet a further system of taxation on an already overburdened Civil Service and on the legal valuations.

They further argue that the case for a wealth tax can be sustained only if its introduction is accompanied by a sharp reduction in the rate of tax on investment income and by indexation of both capital gains and of threshold and rate bands of a wealth tax in order to remove the inflationary element.

They suggest that the tax bracket (excluding the investment income surcharge) should be 70 per cent and the present higher rate bands be made wider.

Also that the recently introduced capital transfer tax should be given time to settle down so that not only the administrative problems be sorted out but also that its effect on the redistribution of wealth can be assessed.

The accountants also argue that unless small businesses are to be decimated it is essential to distinguish between wealth organized into one economic unit—and illiquid in its parts—and other more readily marketable assets.

There is the broad proposal that the object of a wealth tax should be to direct economic resources to productive ends rather than the redistribution of wealth. They also point out the dangers of "the erosion of tax morality" if the tax remains widely unacceptable.

Snake problems of Swiss franc still to be solved

Brussels, April 9.—Several key problems concerning Switzerland's joining the floating block of European currencies known as "the snake", remained to be solved after a central bank governors' meeting in Basel on Monday and Tuesday.

Senior central bank officers said today that little doubt was left that the Swiss franc would join currencies of West Germany, the Benelux, Denmark, Norway and Sweden which make up the snake.

French concern: M. Jean-Pierre Fourcade, the French Finance Minister, said he was still concerned that entry of the Swiss franc into the joint European float would result in an intolerable upward strain on the float.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unjustifiably high increase in Patent Office fees

From Mr Robert E. D. Clark

Sir, It is heartening to learn that "a wave of protest is building up against the large increases in official patent fees payable from May 24". Why in the name of all that is just are inventors called upon to pay fees at all?

As a little known writer, every book and article I publish is copyrighted. No one demands of me a fee for the upkeep of the British Museum Library or the other copyright libraries where copies are stored. But as an inventor, likewise in a small way, I am expected to help keep the Patent Office solvent.

Where is the justice in rewarding authors and finding inventors? Most inventions, like most books, only bring their originators a few hundred pounds, the results, quite often, of years of creative work. The old discrimination against inventors was bad enough; the new charges will often put patenting out of the picture so far as the private inventor is concerned.

If the state cannot afford to finance the Patent Office, why can it not be financed from royalties? Why not an option to pay fees and keep royalties, or to pay no fees (save £1 for provisional patents to discourage frivolous applications) but to assign an agreed proportion of future profits, if any, to the Patent Office?

Or why not allow the inventor a reasonable return, after which the Patent Office might take say 75 per cent or 90 per cent? Such an arrangement would at least have the merit of making disclosure of inventions seem worthwhile.

ROBERT E. D. CLARK, 38 Giron Road, Cambridge CB3 0LL.

From Mr G. A. Bloxham
Sir, I would like to add a word to the article by Adrian Hope (April 9) on the recent increase in Patent Office fees. My pro-

cession is highest at the increases of about 90 per cent not only in patent but also in trademark and registered design fees, because this seemed at the outset to be a great deal more than could be justified, even allowing for the application of the new "opportunity costing" system to the Patent Office.

What has happened is that without explanation or consultation, the Department of Trade has decided that the system always used hitherto, namely to pitch the fees at a level which would make the fee-bearing services of the Patent Office self-supporting, should be thrown overboard in favour of the Stage 4 rules laid down for nationalized industries.

Under these the previous year's deficit could be made up by increased charges in six months. In other words the increases are approximately double what would be required to keep the fee-bearing services of the Patent Office self-supporting.

I am not competent to comment on the rationale of the rules as applied to nationalized industries. I can only say that where, as in the Patent Office, it is simply a question of making one year's fees balance one year's expenditure, extra fees collected to clear a year's deficit in six months could only be justified in anticipation of future inflation of the order of 50 per cent. But this is precisely what Stage 4 is intended to prevent.

I trust that when the next round of fee increases is considered, the department will revert to the time-honoured practice of making the Patent Office self-supporting and no more.

Yours faithfully,
G. A. BLOXHAM, President, Patent Agents, Staple Inn Buildings, High Holborn, WC1V 7PZ.

Paradox facing hydraulics manufacturers

From Mr Bernard C. Wilkins

Sir, Mr Ruddock-West's comment (April 3) on your March 21 article "Hydraulics: a case to cur industry's energy co: highlights a paradox—that, top management of hydraulic manufacturers in effect has, in this decade, obtained a major share of market in which there are overwhelming technological and economic advantages for a medium.

But before your readers clude that at long last they discovered the septic focus of this country's industrial mal they should first consider make-up of the United Kingdom hydraulic industry.

Out of well over 100 hydraulics manufacturers, less than a dozen design, production, city, and market cover relevant to manufacture industries' needs for transmission equipment. Fewer offer a range of components and know-how that in reliability and life, the hydraulic continuous-shift work steel manufacture, machine working, and chemicals.

The vast majority of hydraulic manufacturers, in fact, offer a range of low-pressure, low-power applications, can less make the quantum leap, new designs, new production methods than any hydraulic heavy engine manufacturers.

In such circumstances, it is not surprising that the new transmission market, far from being unimaginative, are facing up to the realities of the situation.

Yours faithfully,
BERNARD C. WILKINS, Senior Partner, Power Management Associates, Benthall Farm, Tadmor, Lancashire, OL14 6QR.

Shock treatment

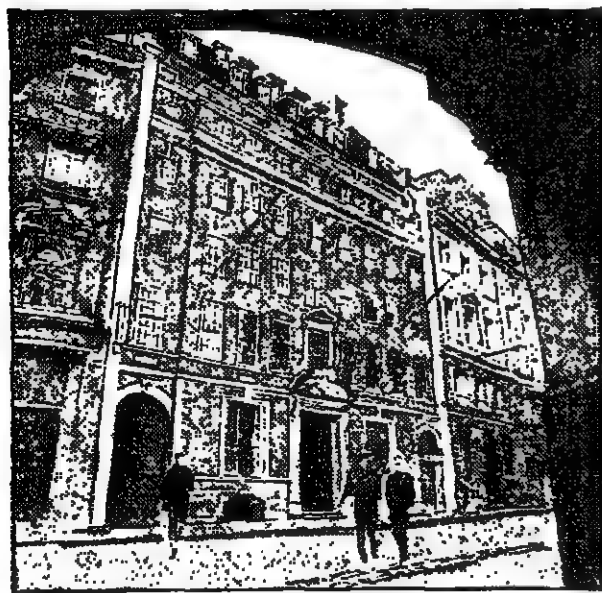
From Mr H. Berger

Sir, The Eastern Electric Board have now written to that notable director, Mr. H. Berger, assurance that I been correctly charged, letter to The Times (March 19) caused them to look into costs again. Your readers like to know the result.

It has been found that unscrewing the fuse box one side of the wall and fixing them to the other and connecting up, I was charged £21.85; and when I have now been told, it not after all necessary to do the "leaky" of the main (which was, I should thought, a very material item in the original estimate the price for that part of job, whatever it may entail, and which took man 34 hours to do, is increased by £8.21 to £34.

Yours faithfully,
H. BERGER, 106 Cassibury Drive, Watford, Hertfordshire.

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Broadstone Investment Trust Limited

(Managed by J. Henry Schroder Wagg & Co. Limited)

The Forty-ninth Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday 9 April 1975 at 120 Cheapside, London EC2V 6DS

The following is a summary of the Report by the Directors for the year ended 31 December 1974.

	1974	1973
£	£	£
Total Revenue	1,000,098	888,364
Net Revenue available for Ordinary Dividend	414,829	356,994
Earnings per Ordinary share	3.48p	2.97p
Ordinary dividends for the year, net per share	3.09p	2.59p
Net asset value per 20p Ordinary share, assuming full conversion of the loan stock	76p	122p

During the period under review the stock markets of both London and New York declined, the F.T.-Actuaries All-Share Index falling by 55.3% and the Standard and Poor Composite Index (adjusted for variations in the exchange rate and the investment currency premium) by 5.2%.

Reflecting these movements, the total net assets of the Company declined to £13.4m, representing a decrease of 32.8% from the total net assets at 31 December 1973.

INTERIM STATEMENT

M P KENT LIMITED

PROPERTY AND HOUSING DEVELOPERS

INTERIM STATEMENT

	Six Months ended 31st Dec. 1974	Six Months ended 31st Dec. 1973	Year ended 30th June 1974
£	£	£	£
Sales	8,759,219	4,716,862	9,896,794
Trading profit	1,561,058	1,254,529	2,567,954
Rents received	183,895	27,302	110,977
Interest Paid	590,822	378,291	914,079
Profit before tax	1,114,131	903,540	1,764,852
Profit after tax	594,781	451,770	869,647
Interim Dividend % (Gross)	7.462	6.3	23.625
Earnings per share after tax	5.1p	4.6p	8.7p

Shareholders were advised on the 13th March, 1975 that the Directors had declared a gross Interim Dividend of 7.462 per cent (Interim 1974—6.3 per cent). This dividend payment of 0.5p per share net (total £22,200) was despatched on the 4th April, 1975 to shareholders on the register at the close of business on the 10th March, 1975. Shareholders have been given the option of electing to receive ordinary shares instead of the proposed Interim Dividend.

Rental income on completed properties has reached an annual rate of £416,000 and rents receivable in the current six months will show a substantial increase.

Housing emphasis is now on smaller units at increased densities aimed specifically at the first time buyer.

Although banking facilities available remain intact, short term borrowings have been reduced by over £1M since the end of the financial year.

As a result of the uneven spread of commercial trading profits the Directors anticipate that in the absence of unforeseen circumstances profits for the year will be in line with the previous year's level.

BY THE FINANCIAL EDITOR

Babcock unlocks its treasure

A day that produced some good results from the engineering sector, notably the long first half reported by Babcock, the most significant news was undoubtedly the sale of its shares in Deutsche Babcock, a market has been well aware of the underlying wealth in Babcock for a number of years, but the timing of any move to unlock these resources has been uncertain enough to prevent the market from reflecting the share price. For instance, against the £31.7m proceeds for the DBK—which could well work out at something over £25m—it is not many months since Babcock itself was capitalised under £12m. Ahead of yesterday's news the market value was £32.8m and by the close it had risen a fifth to £39.6m.

As for the implications of the sale, three points seem worth noting. First, there is the question of the development of the company. Here the Babcock line is that it has been much too busy negotiating the sale to think about it to do next but the feeling today was that it might take a close look at the United States—though not in conjunction with American Babcock (which holds 23 per cent of the Babcock equity). Second, there is the impact on the balance sheet. Here we are talking about a share sale which will add some £25m to the balance sheet and one of the avenues it could now open up, according to Babcock, is that it could consider adding borrowings to its sale proceeds to make a change-of-ownership acquisition.

Finally, there is the impact on profitability, and here the initial figures for itself given the effective yield on the stake by way of dividend was under 3 per cent. Not that Babcock is necessarily going to need any additional help to keep profits rising ahead in the current year. True, last year's improvement to £3.9m pre-tax (against market expectations of around £3m) owed a fair amount to write-back of the previous year's £750,000 share of the BND, provision, but there was still a better trading come than expected, with instruction equipment in particular holding up better than expected.

This year's first half, moreover, will compare with the "elementary opening half" to which there is also some very potential in the deal. Dockham problems and record order books the group as a whole. A 1 of 3.1 per cent at 87p is a sparkling, but it is more than four times covered even 77p earnings.

1974 (1973)
Capitalization £39.6m
Sales £248m (£220.2m)
Pre-tax profits £3.9m (£3.1m)
Dividend gross £2.6p (£2.3p)



Mr John King, chairman of Babcock & Wilcox, considering what to do with £32m.

of a marked underwriting recovery in Canada and Australia on the back of rising increases and hopelessly late in the year improvement in the United States—overall, that suggests that Sun Alliance should eliminate its underwriting losses this year, while investment income (where growth slowed from 38 to 25 per cent between the two halves of last year) could grow by around 12 per cent to give earnings of perhaps between 47p and 50p a share.

These figures are prospective, however, by the mere 12 per cent increase by value in sales in the first quarter of 1975. Underlying demand still appears to be buoyant but there looks to be a certain amount of stockpiling by overseas customers (who account for 57 per cent of turnover) towards the end of 1974. Inevitably, there is the fear that Morgan may now be on a plateau, but a clearer indication should emerge with the interim report. Until then, the shares, selling at 73 times earnings and yielding nearly 8 per cent, on the pre-rights price of 76p—with the rights themselves worth 3.2p a share.

1974 (1973)
Capitalization £131m
Pre-tax profits £2.7m (£2.5m)
Dividend gross 22.9p (20.4p)

1974 (1973)
Capitalization £131m
Pre-tax profits £2.7m (£2.5m)
Dividend gross 22.9p (20.4p)

Wilmot-Breeden Holding the final

So little was expected from the motor component group Wilmot-Breeden that yesterday's news of a 1974 profits crash but a substantial final dividend (after a small interim) helped the share up to 216. But the dividend decision does seem a little puzzling. In the first half year the group made only £760,000 pre-tax, in the second six months £630,000, and for the full year Wilmot was left with profits after corporation tax and redundancy payments of only £487,000 against £12m. The chairman is, moreover, expected to be cautious about the first half of this year. In his annual statement as well he might—United Kingdom car output down from 1.74 million units to 1.53 million last year, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders forecasting low demand for a least two years, and Wilmot heavily dependent on original equipment. True, it also has an important subsidiary in France which dominates the market over there, but this too has found the going tough.

Wilmot can point out, however, that the dividend decision costs little, and that the balance-sheet is still strong. Borrowings are well within facilities and along with interest charges should come down this year now that factory streamlining has cut costs. It also seems that £900,000 of the pre-tax profit came from non-car interests—sewage, petrochemicals, hydraulics and elec-

tronics, which are in total doing reasonably well.

For all that, the group heads a motor industry revival in Britain and France to exchange profits and this looks some way away. So dividend and profit prospects look poor and the shares have little appeal, even as an outright gamble. The yield is 10.3 per cent and the p/e is 8.

1974 (1973)
Capitalization £4.4m
Sales £58.6m (£54.5m)
Pre-tax profits £1.4m (£4.2m)
Dividend gross 2.16p (3.86p)

Morgan Crucible Question mark over demand

A £12m leap in bank loans to £17m goes a long way towards explaining Morgan Crucible's £4.7m rights issue. A 26 per cent sales increase last year made its inevitable impact upon working capital requirements and the associated interest charges were £1m higher at £2.41m.

Apart from two specific soft spots—in Australia, which earned virtually nothing, and Morgan's Electrical Carbons—there is a serious concern about the company's earnings, which to 1974, the year progressed but the major divisions all saw substantially improved profits.

An ominous note is sounded, however, by the mere 12 per cent increase by value in sales in the first quarter of 1975. Underlying demand still appears to be buoyant but there looks to be a certain amount of stockpiling by overseas customers (who account for 57 per cent of turnover) towards the end of 1974. Inevitably, there is the fear that Morgan may now be on a plateau, but a clearer indication should emerge with the interim report. Until then, the shares, selling at 73 times earnings and yielding nearly 8 per cent, on the pre-rights price of 76p—with the rights themselves worth 3.2p a share.

1974 (1973)
Capitalization £25m
Sales £62.5m (£49.5m)
Pre-tax profits £6.8m (£5.6m)
Dividend gross 6.41p (5.69p)

Horizon Midland A happy outcome

A 52 per cent acceptance of Horizon Midland's special rights issue may make the description of the takeover "a happy outcome" look puzzling. But this issue was a special animal and the outcome, in effect amounts to holders of only 42 per cent of the company equity taking up 58 per cent of the new shares. It fully vindicates the underwriting consortium's decision to rest shareholder loyalty.

The 58 per cent of Horizon Midland held by the Court Line receiver was offered at 16.7p a share to the holders of the other 48 per cent and, with the exception of about 6 per cent of the equity held by Horizon Midland directors, these remaining holdings were widely spread. The basis of the rights issue was 1.6 for 1 and though the price was around 20p at the time this was pretty normal in the circumstances and the rights had no saleable value. Nor were shareholders permitted to sell them.

Court Line's 58 per cent then, goes 30 per cent to existing shareholders, 10 per cent each to Nottinghamshire County Council and Lancashire United Transport, and 18 per cent to Thomson Travel and 3 per cent to Wesleyan and General Assurance. Hill Samuel bows out but without collecting credit for a solution which seems to have pleased all parties.

Oliver Stanley

How inflation is increasing the burden of taxes

Whatever Mr Healey says on Tuesday, taxes will be higher in 1975-76 than ever before. Higher, that is, in real value terms, because of the stealthy effect of inflation—20 per cent per annum?—upon the steeply progressive British tax system.

So long as the pound is depreciating at that rate, the purchasing power of taxable income must be halved every four years. So long as rates and reliefs remain constant, the index of income tax will automatically double within the same period.

To achieve a neutral Budget, in terms of spending power, Mr Healey should make deliberate tax reductions merely to counter the position. He should turn his attention first to personal reliefs, threshold points where the effect of inflation is readily perceptible. You can regard these reliefs as tax thresholds for low wage earners or as income slices, generally tax exempt, to pay family maintenance costs. Either way, it is apparent that post-increases have never kept up with inflation.

Hence the lower paid are dragged into the tax system at lower real-value thresholds each year, by each annual round wage increases secured to keep up with living costs.

On the alternative application, the real-value amounts allotted to bread winners to support their families is being progressively eroded. Could it not be that the repeatedly lowered thresholds have become a pressure pushing wage earners to claim a higher gross?

The historic table of tax rates and reliefs shows substantial increases granted in 1973-74. This is misleading. In that year, the earned income relief (2/9ths) was abolished and the personal reliefs were all increased by 9/7ths to compensate for inflation.

There have been no increases at all in the single and married men's personal allowances for three years since 1972-73; and no increases in child allowances for four years. The least increase of approximately 25 per cent made in 1971-72, child allowances had remained constant for the eight previous tax years, back to 1963-64.

Also, there is a critical link which relates the right to child allowances. If the child's income be greater than a stipulated amount, then the allowance is abated by one pound for every pound by which the child's income exceeds the limit.

The limit of £115 has remained unchanged since 1963-64, which seems absurd in the light of changing money values over the last 12 years.

The application here is mostly to a child's part-time earnings during holidays or college vacations, casual baby-sitting, and so on. Any investment income receivable by a child will be treated as personal income.

Consideration of these allowances against a backdrop of 20 per cent annual inflation reveals how income tax becomes automatically higher each year. At that inflation rate, child allowances would have halved in real money value terms. The child allowance income limit would have reduced to 8 per cent of the amount stipulated in 1963-64.

Dependent relative relief, granted to taxpayers who support relatives incapacitated, widowed or divorced and who have no income apart from their retirement pensions, would have been totally wiped out by 20 per cent annual inflation since the last increase in 1960-61.

The same principle applies to a rate scale. Proportionate taxation, for example, value added tax—operates differently

from progressive taxes. Inflation increases the amount of the tax base and the amount of the tax in identical proportions, so that the real value of tax remains constant.

Where there is a rate scale in successive slices, inflation moves taxpayers up the rate scale, when their real value incomes remain constant. Two examples must suffice. In 1946-47 the marginal tax rates applicable to incomes of £10,000 per annum and £20,000 were 82 per cent and 95 per cent. The comparable marginal rates for 1974-75 are 78 per cent and 98 per cent.

Thus, despite the dramatic fall in the purchasing power of the pound over the past 28 years, top tax rates have been reached at constant income levels. Even supposing an inflation rate of 4 per cent per annum since Second World War, the purchasing power of £10,000 will have fallen to approximately £3,250 in terms of immediate postwar values.

Now that the Government is to issue savings index-linked bonds, Mr Healey might like to consider index-linking capital gains tax. Soon there is to be offered a five-year savings bond, the value of which is to be adjusted each year in accordance with the retail price index. If such an investment were gains taxable, it would illustrate once and for all how the yield of gains tax must be substantially the product of currency debasement. During the period of ownership.

This is an aspect which was considered as long ago as 1955 when Professor Kaldor wrote his famous Memorandum of Dissent to the Royal Commission on the Taxation of Profits. At that time Professor Kaldor conceded that the rise in capital values occurring in the course of inflation does not increase the taxable capacity of the owner in the same way as a rise during a period of constant prices.

Finally, inflation obviously weakens the effect of tax depreciation allowances granted against the cost of business plant and machinery. All such allowances operate upon an historic cost basis—that is, they are calculated to relieve from tax some amount of profits corresponding to the original cost of the plant, the relief being given up, though again the Chancellor will not say so in so many words, per-

manently and because the price is too high.

The price is quite simply, as it has always been, though masked on occasions by the usual four-yearly cyclical fluctuations and by periodic external disturbances, accelerating and ultimately explosive inflation. Demand management, the key concept of the 1944 approach, can hold unemployment below the level to which it would tend under balanced fiscal and neutral monetary policies only by adding more to the flow of monetary demand than the underlying growth of productivity in the economy warrants.

In the short terms this stimulates output and employment; but, as the extra demand interacts with the slower growth of output capacity, it begins to force up prices and employment begins to fall back to its long-run equilibrium level.

To prevent this the Government then has to inject further inflationary demand sufficient not only to outweigh the effects of rising prices on real effective demand, but also to achieve the required additional real stimulus.

In this way any given employment target above the long-run equilibrium level requires progressively more and more stimulus, always running ahead of the expected and discounted rate of inflation. In the long-run the target is unattainable because, once the point of hyperinflation is reached, money breaks down; and a violent economic contraction sets in.

The process is all the more marked where collective bargaining is prominent. By raising wages above the market level, labour monopolies reduce employment and so add to the pressure on Governments to "reflate" and thereby further to accelerate the inflation rate.

The abandonment of the full employment commitment, though pressed in next week's Budget, is likely to be long drawn out and painful. Before the end of this year, or very soon after, Mr Healey is likely to be forced to abandon his inflationary policies (which are somewhat misleadingly coupled in his mind with waiting for the 1976 world economic recovery to give Britain exported expansion) because they involve a probable 5 or 6 per cent unemployment rate in 1976. As this becomes apparent political imperatives are likely

Ending of the age of full employment

Peter Jay
Economics Editor

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Abbey National Annual General Meeting 9th April, 1975, Sir Stanley Morton reports.

"Balance Sheet provides convincing proof of the Society's tremendous financial strength."

Among the points made by the Chairman, Sir Stanley Morton, in reporting on the year ending 31st December 1974 were:

Total Assets now exceed £3,000 million

In 1974, the total assets of the Society rose to £3,000m, an increase of almost £431m. Under the special arrangement negotiated with the Building Societies Association, the Society accepted loans from HM Government totalling around £73m which had been reduced by £32m by the end of the year and the remaining sum due from the Society to the Government has since been repaid.

Over 3 million Investors

The Society received the record sum of £1,707m in share subscriptions and deposits (including £125m interest credited to accounts) and the principal repaid to shareholders and depositors increased by approximately £350m, which was a slightly higher figure than in 1973.

It is particularly gratifying that nearly 450,000 new investors opened accounts during 1974, taking the total at the end of the year well over 3m, an increase of 316,000.

Mortgage Advances in Second Half of 1974—The Highest Ever

On the mortgage side of our activities, advances completed during the year reached the creditable total of £251m, which was not far short of the record figure of 1973. Between July and December, £315m advances were completed—a much higher amount than in any previous six-month period.

The pattern of lending was much the same as in previous years, with approximately 99 per cent of the total amount being advanced to individual home-buyers, well over half of whom were first-time purchasers. One-quarter of the total was lent to people up to twenty-five years of age and 60 per cent to applicants earning not more than £3,000 p.a.

It is particularly pleasing to record that despite the slight fall in over-all lending, the amount advanced on newly-built properties at £147m was £4m more than in the previous year. The Society financed a proportion of about 1 in 7 of all new properties completed in the private sector in 1974.

Liquid Funds Increased

There has never been a year in which the importance of a sound balance sheet, and particularly of providing adequate liquidity, has been more evident. You will recall the demands made upon building societies in the early months of 1974, and although, week by week, your Society was still receiving more money in savings and deposits, it was a great comfort that we were able to come through such a demanding period with the knowledge that very adequate funds were available to us.



In the event, by the end of the year, it was possible to build up liquid funds to a total of 17.1 per cent of total assets, and even allowing for the £41m of loans from HM Government which remained outstanding, the liquidity ratio was 16.1 per cent at 31st December, 1974.

Management Expenses only a little above 1973

Despite the fact that inflation generally had been running at around 20 per cent, I am pleased to be able to tell you that our Management expenses ratio was very little above that of 1973, and indeed remained considerably below the level of 1972.

Reserves

The margin afforded by the interest rate structure during the year was very slender but it was possible by skilful investment of funds, and by containing management expenses, to offset the steep increase in the Composite Rate of Tax which followed the raising of the basic rate of Income Tax, and to add to the General Reserves a total of some £12m. This meant that our reserve ratio at 31st December, 1974 was 3.02 per cent of total assets, compared with 3.06 per cent at the end of 1973.

Branch Development

We continued our planned programme of branch expansion. The improved service which we are able to give is, we know, greatly appreciated by our members. Our business connections and by the general public. It has, too, been an important factor in the unquestionable success of the Society in fulfilling its primary objectives.

The adoption of the Report and Accounts was seconded by the Deputy Chairman, Mr. Ron. The Lord Hall of the Society, Mr. H. L. P. Tindal, Chief Financial Manager, acknowledged the tribute paid to the staff.

ABBEE NATIONAL
BUILDING SOCIETY
Abbey House, Baker Street, London NW1 6XL

Business Diary: Supersonic shaikh • Shirt tale

The East Airlines made a £1.6m in 1974 and to repeat the performance almost exactly in 1975, despite this financial fall, the Najib Alameddine, the company's chairman, is now in London to discuss his intention of buying Concorde supersonic aircraft into one of leasing it from British Airways, Air France, or any other operator in the market.

EA plan to operate Concorde on what they call the nonball service from Beirut by way of London, south-west France, to York, to cater for the growing business traffic. The Shaikh, who has had MEA from a DC-3-type into one of the most successful operators in the world—shortly to receive Boeing jets—in the past 20 years, is one of his regular monthly visits to the Kingdom, where he has a flat in Arlington Square as his second home.



MEA's Shaikh Najib yesterday, change of plan.

The Shaikh, who is married monogamously to a Swiss doctor, replied: "Only one. Running an airline is such a full-time business these days."

Woman power

Three years ago, shirt manufacturers, Doner, was reported as saying that he was

ted to replace with men the 1,400 women employed at his five factories in Yorkshire and in South Wales. Doner, founder and chairman of fashion shirtmaker Double Two International, started his business in Wakefield in 1939 with a few sewing machines and six girls.

By 1972, with four automated plants in Yorkshire and another at Ystalyfera, near Swansea, he said he wanted to build up his workforce of about 100 men for three reasons. One was the passage of the Equal Pay Act 1970, due to come into force on December 29 this year, which would drive up the wages of women doing work the same or broadly similar to that of the men.

The second was the raising of the school leaving age and the lowering of the age at which girls marry, which meant that Double Two got less time out of the girls after having trained them.

Doner said that he and his managing director, Mr. Richard, still employed about 1,400 women and about 100 men and that at 200 more women could

be found Double Two would start them tomorrow. His statement of intent, he added, had not gone down at all well either with the National Union of

"Craftsmen" are to disappear from the building industry, its National Joint Council decided yesterday. They will now be called "craft operatives" to eliminate sex distinctions from agreements.

There are few women building workers, although many are employed in joinery factories making components. Some of these will now be called "wood-working production operatives". The council had been discussing equal pay and conditions in anticipation of the Equal Pay Act.

Tailors and Garment Workers or with what he called "Woman's Lib".

Double Two, he said, had not had a serious dispute throughout its 35 years and it had been decided not to start one now. The company had continued to automate in order to compete with dumped Far Eastern shirts, and now, just as three years ago, was in the anomalous position of (a) being unable to keep up with demand, yet (b) having to work the machinery for one shift instead of three.

Doner said that while the company was not like to employ more rather than fewer women, the company operated in coal mining areas. Many of the women were married to what he called "the new coal

barons" and were not overly particular about seeking work. While resigned to the enforcement of the Equal Pay Act, he is positively looking forward to the Sex Discrimination Act, since it will entail the repeal of the Factories Act restriction upon employment of women at night.

The unions, by the way, are again reeling, although the acts—a relic of Victorian philanthropy—now apply to only about a quarter of the female workforce, and have not been strictly enforced since the last war.

There was an inconclusive review of the acts in the late 1960s, which reported that while a woman cannot normally be employed after 8 pm in a factory, if she becomes a nurse, a bus conductress or a waitress she can be employed until any hour of the night or, indeed, all night.

The hilling for next Tuesday's meetings of the Industrial Forum and the choir of the old Radio Music Hall by bringing together once more those two famous funny misters—Murgatroyd and Winterbottom. But, alas, it won't be a trip down memory lane with Tommy Handley and Ronald Frankau, but a peep into the future with Walter Murgatroyd, Professor of Thermal Power at Imperial College, speaking on the unfunny subject of energy utilization, with Lord Winterbottom, a government defence spokesman, in the chair.

FINANCIAL NEWS AND MARKET REPORTS

Stock markets

Interest rate worries unsettle share prices

The stock market was again unsettled by fears of a renewed rise in world interest rates, and by hints of sizable pressure on the borrowing requirements of the Government. Gilt were on the slide again and equities found that buyers were no longer interested.

Rights issues from Associated Insurers, Manufacturers, and Morgan Crucible maintained the

trade figures was also unsettling the market.

Short-dated stocks also chiefly displayed losses as the close, although they recovered slightly from earlier weak levels. The most traded stocks finished with net losses of 1.16 point, having been 2.15 point down on the previous day. The recovery was helped by "after closing".

Equities survived an early market drop, but proved unable to make headway. Major stocks suffered from a lack of buying interest while the second lines remained on the sidelines.

KCI (219p), Bechtel (218p), Unilever (332p) closed at the lowest levels of the day. Glaxo slipped from 414p to 406p. At 107p, CompuLink was the only stock to close at £100.

quiet day, with GKN finally unchanged at 210p as the market absorbed the news of the rights issue. Tube Investments (226p), Metal Box (220p), Dunlop Hedges (45p), and BLMC (71p) shaded lower in thin trade.

Taylor Woodrow (220p) continued to benefit from the good profits disclosed earlier this week. But RMI (102p) and GEC (212p) slipped lower.

Both Freemans (Ldn) and Grattan Warehouses suffered further falls and food shares such as Reckitt & Colman (258p) and Sainsbury (158p) were weaker. Marks & Spencer with figures due today, traded cautiously to close unchanged at 187p.

Banking shares were generally lower. Standard & Chartered Bank lost a further 7p to 365p on the disclosure that Chase Manhattan intend to

sell its share stake. Losses in Barclays Bank (230p) and in Lloyds (160p) were held to a few pence. Among insurance, Sun Alliance dipped to 355p on the fall in profits.

There were a number of contracting features on the trading front. The most prominent was Babcock & Wilcox where a 21 per cent growth in profits, the sale to Iran of the stake in

Deutsche Babcock (hinted at here yesterday) and the lack of a rights issue brought a sharp 15p to 87p.

An improvement in first-half trading enabled Birminghams to recover its overnight position of 43p after an early slip, but Morgan Crucible shares were not happy after a 4.5m rights and closed 7p off at 76p. An interim loss and the passing of a dividend weakened G. & G. Kynoch 5p to 30p.

Oil shares staged a minor rally after several poor sessions. But turnover was slim. Gold shares established no trend but remained content to trade at slightly lower levels.

United States interest was weaker to be thin.

Equity turnover on April 9, £58.4m (16,002 bargains). Active stocks yesterday, according to Exchange Telegraph: Babcock & Wilcox, ICI, Bata, Distillers, Barclay Bank, Midland Bank, National Westminster Bank, National Westminster Bank and Bechtel.

Latest dividends

Company	Dividend	Year	Year	Year	Year
Admiral	1.20	1974	1973	1972	1971
Admiral	1.20	1974	1973	1972	1971
Admiral	1.20	1974	1973	1972	1971
Admiral	1.20	1974	1973	1972	1971
Admiral	1.20	1974	1973	1972	1971
Admiral	1.20	1974	1973	1972	1971
Admiral	1.20	1974	1973	1972	1971
Admiral	1.20	1974	1973	1972	1971
Admiral	1.20	1974	1973	1972	1971
Admiral	1.20	1974	1973	1972	1971

Overseas

Carter Hale checked in rougher year

Carter Hawley Hale, the American stores group which is a 20.5 per cent stake in the US of Fraser, came under increasing pressure from higher costs and interest rates in the year to February 1. Net earnings fell from 9.5m to \$32.4m (£13.5m) as a result of a 4m drop in operating profit and a \$3.4m adjustment arising from a new method of valuing store inventories. Earnings a share of \$1.71, or 22.5p, fell from \$1.95, or 24.5p, in the previous year.

Mr E. W. Carter, chairman, said customer demand began to drop from last September and conditions are expected to continue during opening half of this year.

Mainline props be auctioned

Sydney, April 9.—Properties of the Mainline Corporation in South Wales, Canberra and Northern Territory are to be auctioned on April 16.

The official receiver and manager of Mainline, Mr James Dixon, said that properties since December had met secured debts and accrued interest to date.

Assets of Mainline were \$6.2m of which \$4.8m were subject to specific charges.

Mr Jamison said he hoped to sell the 100 per cent owned subsidiary in Squaw Valley, California, for \$151.2m as an earning business. He added a once that sale and the proceeds of the Australian properties are made, unsecured creditors could have some hope of return.

lanese opening loss

elanese Corporation reports a New York first quarter loss of nil per share against 2 on sales down from \$440m to \$372m, producing a net loss of 17c compared with a profit of 52c. The company had a 10p drop in business in December and then "operated at rather substantial loss" in the three months from December to February. But March trading results were "very good" to break even and April results indicate an improvement outlook.—AP-DJ.

yer sales fall

ayer AG group sales in the first quarter were below those of the same period on practically unchanged prices. The company said in Frankfurt, where sales of the chemical industry as a whole might not be at all in the current year. Textiles and health-related products were doing well though plastics, paints and fibres were sluggish.—Reuters.

ells Fargo advance

ells Fargo reports earnings for the first quarter of \$5 at \$13.17m (\$9.93m). Income after security transactions, \$13.16m (\$9.97m).

The increase in earnings was due primarily to the favourable level of spreads between rates of funds and interest. Total loan volume was only a small increase over the previous year.

A significantly larger provision was made for loan losses in 1974, because of continuing unfavourable economic conditions. The first-quarter provision this year was \$13.5m (\$9m).

Myson on recovery tack after dismal 1974

Essex-based heating and ventilation group Myson Group had a dismal experience in 1974, but the good news is that the group is achieving the high volume increases expected. Taxable profits worked out to £12.2m against £13.13m previously but the latter figure was for an 18-month period. A further comparison is to put last year's figure on an annual basis, then emerges at £2.09m and this year in comparison then shows a downturn of about 42 per cent.

On the other hand turnover for 1974 on an annual basis shows a vast improvement on £22.1m compared with £15.68m on an annual basis compared with an actual £22.5m in the 18-month period. Earnings per share were 7.7p against 16p for the period. The final dividend is to be 0.75p compared with 3.15p for the period making a total payment of 2.40p against 7.65p.



Mr R. E. Myson, chairman of Myson Group. After dismal experience in 1974, first quarter sales helped to cut bank taxable high volume increases expected.

Throughout 1974 the group carried out a comprehensive reorganisation programme which involved the closure of some companies and the relocation of work and plant into other units. The cost of the reorganisation has been deducted from revenue reserves and amounted to £97,000 after tax relief.

Difficult year at Northgate Exp

Last year was disappointing in many important respects for Northgate Exploration with the financial results being adversely affected by shortfalls in production, sales and higher costs. But, Mr Peter Gordon, vice chairman, in the annual report, the major factor was the Irish government's tax legislation which terminated the previous tax-free arrangement and substituted a 10 per cent tax rate.

The Gordon family will cease operations this year—in 1974 some 13,300 tons of copper, silver and mercury concentrate were produced—with almost all the extractable ore now having been exploited.

Interim advance by William Boulton

Having reached a peak profit last year of £799,000, against £656,000, William Boulton (Holdings) has produced a rise in its interim profits for the six months to December 31, from £363,000 to £429,000. Turnover for the period increased from £5,23m to £7.56m. Shareholders of the group—which makes machinery for the ceramic, chemical, food and process industries, and also iron and non-ferrous foundries and general engineering activities—are to receive an interim payment of 0.65p, against 0.58p.

Nat. Electric Cons.

National Electric Construction, an investment trust and subsidiary of British Electric Finance, announced a dividend of 1.51p, payable on May 8, and interest received in 1974 unchanged at £327,000 and pre-tax profits of £307,000 (£305,000).

Nat. Sunlight Laundries

On turnover up from £5.5m to £6m, taxable profits of the National Sunlight Laundries group have risen from £297,000 to £368,000 before a loss applicable to minority interests of £250 (£504). At the attributable level, the group's profits are £113,000, and the dividend is raised from 1.15p to 1.29p. Earnings a share come out at 1.77p against 1.58p.

Free State Saaplaas

Free State Saaplaas Gold Mining Co also announce that, of the 14,04m shares offered, at a price of £2.50 per share, to stockholders in President Brand Gold Mining, subscriptions have

Issues & Loans

a need to purchase a further range of oil tools and equipment for operations based in Britain, while it is planned to start a service base in the Far East.

The interim dividend is 1.46p against 1.3p.

Petrocon places 1m ordinary at 73½p

Announcing a placing of ordinary shares, Petrocon Group also reports an interim profit advance. On turnover up from £2,540m to £2,574m, pre-tax profit jumped from £235,000 to £616,200 for the six months to February 23. The directors are confident that year-end results will be satisfactory. Meanwhile, arrangements are in hand for a placing with institutional investors of 1m ordinary shares at 73½p per share. The shares were 13p up at 82p yesterday. The new shares will not rank for the interim dividend.

The proceeds will be used in the expansion of its existing activities with emphasis on its service operations to energy-related industries. There is also

Eurobond prices (midday indicators)

Country	Issue	Price	Yield
UK	100m	101.10	10.10
UK	100m	101.10	10.10
UK	100m	101.10	10.10
UK	100m	101.10	10.10
UK	100m	101.10	10.10
UK	100m	101.10	10.10
UK	100m	101.10	10.10
UK	100m	101.10	10.10
UK	100m	101.10	10.10
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UK	100m	101.10	10.10
UK	100m	101.10	10.10
UK	100m	101.10	10.10
UK	100m	101.10	10.10
UK	100m	101.10	10.10
UK	100m	101.10	10.10
UK	100m	101.10	10.10

Bemrose big upswing but going gets heavy

Taxable profits showing a more than four-fold increase in 1974 are made known by Bemrose Corporation the Derby-based printing, packaging and publishing group but the board warn that although the first quarter of 1975 is in line with budget, the going has become harder for some of the group's customers are adversely affected by the current economic difficulties.

Group taxable profits were far and away a group record and at £1.6m besides showing a four-fold increase on 1973 showed an increase of 40 per cent on the previous record established in 1972. Group turnover recorded an increase of 32 per cent at £23.3m of which exports accounted for £3.6m against £2.4m. Earnings per share leapt from 1.31p to 7.64p and the total dividend is being raised from 2.05p to 3.42p with a final payment of 2.01p.

Metal closures slow down in second half

At the halfway stage profits of Metal Closures Group ended showing a rise of 42 per cent but the board warned shareholders not to expect the same rate of growth in the second half. Their warning proved correct and the year ended with profits at the pre-tax level showing an overall increase of 23.6 per cent from £3.99m to £4.93m from turnover showing an increase of 33 per cent from £27.3m to £36.4m.

Both the profits and turnover were fresh records for the group and from earnings per share up from 10.35p to 12.64p the board are raising the year's total dividend from 4.26p to 4.79p with an unchanged final dividend of 2.69p. The increased profits and turnover in the first half were attributed in particular to those from overseas interests which were running at a record level.

Britains acquire insurance broker

For a total sum of £600,000, dependent on profits, Britains has completed the acquisition of D. E. Heywood (Insurance Brokers) and Cleopatra Investments for £200,000 by way of shares. An additional sum up to a maximum of £400,000 will be payable according to profits between 1975 and 1976 inclusive. The shares will carry the right to a dividend of 1.51p, payable on May 8, and have been placed by Ansbachers on the vendors' behalf. Heywood's net tangible assets at December 31 were some £49,000.

Elbar Industrial

On profit for the nine months to December 31, 1974, of £447,000 the Scottish division of finance company Elbar Industrial has announced a dividend of 6.69p.

Because of acquisitions by the company these figures are not directly comparable but pre-tax profits for the nine months to December 31 compared with the £251,000 brought in last year. This includes the consolidation of a loss by the Charles Clifford Industries company, and excluding the loss, trading profits were £101,000 for the nine months. On an annual basis this is £135,000, compared with £215,000.

Metal Products

Taxable profits of the Metal Products (Willeshall) group are £67,000, for the nine months to December 31, compared with the £251,000 brought in last year. This includes the consolidation of a loss by the Charles Clifford Industries company, and excluding the loss, trading profits were £101,000 for the nine months. On an annual basis this is £135,000, compared with £215,000.

Turnover for the nine months was £7.1m (against £7.6m for the year), and earnings a share are 0.85p (4.5p). The dividend is 0.85p (1.04p) gross.

After a shaky start to the present year, there has been an improvement, and the board hopes that the turnaround continues with higher profit will be achieved this year.

Beeston-Balek

The formal offer by Balek for Beeston Boiler—which is seen by the board of Beeston as the best way of keeping the company going while it sorts out the snags in its troubled automatic foundry plant—has now been sent out. The claim has been made against the supplier of the plant for £1.8m, but because part of the claim is for continuing damages this has since risen to over £3m.

The agreed offer by Balek, a newly-formed company controlled by Thornhill Securities (which is in turn controlled by Mr John Rees) would result in existing Beeston shareholders including Thornhill with 12 per cent holding 52 per cent of Balek and 48 per cent by Thornhill Securities.

Mr John Logue will take over as chairman of Beeston, while the present incumbent will become deputy head of Balek (with Mr R. Palfreyman as chairman).

Camford on target

With the result for the first five months trading now to hand, the board of Camford Engineering is confident of meeting its forecast of taxable profits for the full year jumping from £860,000 to £1.1m.

THE ALLIANCE TRUST COMPANY LIMITED

Year ended 31st January 1975

Statement by the Chairman, Mr. David F. McCurrach

Our earnings at 5.77p slightly exceed our September forecast and are up by 10% on the previous year's 5.25p. Short Term Interest, up £692,000, accounts for most of the rise of £800,000 in our Gross Revenue; the rest comes from Unfranked Investment Revenue including Dollar, Gold and other overseas investments, offset by a drop in U.K. Franked Investment Income of £381,000 wholly due to continuing net sales of U.K. Equity Investments, £9m, over the last two years (our U.K. equity proportion is down from 54% to 35% over the same period). Your Directors recommend a final dividend of 3.65p, against 3.185p, making with the interim of 1.60p a total of 5.25p, against 4.785p.

With the heavy weighting of short deposit interest, with the impact of the policy changes to which I refer later, and with the uncertain outlook for dividends in general both here and in the United States (although we do not expect net cuts in our own portfolio) it must be contemplated that our earnings for the current year may be down. They will, however, benefit from over £170,000 of deposit interest accrued at 31st January 1975 but not included in last year's earnings and it is your Board's intention at least to maintain this year's rate of dividend.

The fall of 17% in our net asset value at 164p per unit compares with a fall of 28% in the F.T. Actuaries Index and 15% in the U.S. Standard & Poor's 500 Share Index adjusted for the investment currency premium rate. Over the last two years, from our own peak of 253p per unit, our drop of 35% compares with no less than 48% in the F.T. Actuaries and 5% in the Standard & Poor's adjusted for the premium. It is fair to stress that with more than half our assets in overseas currencies both our income and valuation are heavily dependent on the sterling rate of exchange and premium; correspondingly, however, we are well protected against any weakening of sterling. By the end of February our net asset value had continued its recovery at 187½p.

INVESTMENT POLICY

The year has been one of turmoil, national and international, political and social, economic and industrial, and above all in the financial markets of the world. The cold figures for the main factors which affect both the value of the company's assets and our investment activity appear in the Statistical Record of the Company's year in the Report. In a year of near disintegration of all financial standards and values, they may conceal more than they reveal but they may bring out in some degree the conflict of forces which have borne upon the quadruple objectives of management over the last year—First, to protect capital against possible disasters of Stock Market collapse or of bankruptcy, corporate or even national. Second, to preserve the real value of capital against erosion by rampant inflation, outstandingly in Britain. Third, to increase the company's revenue collections and dividend distributions. Fourth, and by no means least, to be in a position to take advantage of any real permanent recovery in confidence and in Stock Markets anywhere in the world. These aims are not mutually consistent and in some degree the pursuit of one means some sacrifice of others. For the first, avoidance of disaster, we have maintained a high proportion of liquid or near liquid assets, 19.7% at the year end (10% in sterling; this has also helped the third objective, increasing revenue). Simultaneously the second objective, preservation of real capital, has led us to increase non-sterling interests and part of our liquidity is in U.S. Dollars (4%) and part in Deutsche Marks (51%). For the same reason we have increased Gold interests to 34% and have bought German equities (24%), retaining our equity stake in U.S. and Canada (33% together). Increasing revenue is met partly by liquid and fixed interest holdings but fundamentally by a continued concentration on the strongest and most vigorous companies. For our fourth and major long term objective we can only point again to the quality of our equities and to the fact that despite the conservatism imposed on us by an uncertain, not to say perilous, future 77% of our funds are in equities. We are still backing a future for capitalist systems three to one, but more than half overseas.

OUTLOOK

The root of our present crisis has been visible for a long time. In a Statement in 1969 I spoke of "the agonising doubt... whether the U.K. and U.S. Governments, nominally dedicated to the control of inflation, had the will and the ability to face the political and social costs." Again in March 1971: "Throughout the year, almost the whole western world has been preoccupied by the quest for a way to control cost inflation without plunging into recession." And finally later that year: "A year ago, the U.S. authorities sought to reflate before having quelled inflation. As a result, neither policy worked."

I quote these remarks, made under Governments of both major Parties in Britain, simply to underline for how long the critical state of our basic problem has been plain to see (it has been with us very much longer than that), and how often the western world has vacillated in craven refusal to take the superficially harder choice. It is clear now that in the end there is no choice; high inflation, no less than recession, along with many other evils ends in high unemployment but with the difference that it is more acute and uncontrollable. Each retreat from the brink of recession has increased the first social bill and the risk of new catastrophe. Even now with inflation still potent but when a cure seems almost within reach in the form of a general slow down, the dread of lost jobs, profits and votes is creating pressures everywhere—to reflate too soon and too much all over again. It seems forgotten that while recession is curable and its very real pains may be eased, continuous high inflation corrupts and corrodes irreversibly ending in chaos. Inflation is a drug. Taken in small doses it stimulates, insensibly it becomes an addiction, finally it is a tyrant and a killer.

The future, therefore, defies analysis. One can but hope that history so recent will not be repeated, particularly in those countries, outstandingly Germany but also until recently the United States, in which inflation has been treated with the tameness which it deserves. It is because these two countries have so far most firmly faced the problem, having consequently relatively low inflation rates and even some scope for reflation, and because we believe that in this crisis preservation of capital values becomes a prime target even at the expense of temporary loss of income, we have put money into Germany, 73% of our funds and maintained our North American proportion at 36%. Our total non-sterling proportion now stands at 51.9% and we still have no foreign currency loans.

14th March 1975.

Copies of the Report and Accounts may be obtained from the Secretary, Meadow House, 64 Reform Street, Dundee DD1 1TJ.

GRAMPIAN HOLDINGS

Preliminary Results for the year ended 31st December 1974.

GRAMPIAN HOLDINGS LIMITED announce profits (subject to audit) before tax for the year ended 31st December 1974 of £2,407,800 (£2,551,800). The directors propose a final dividend of 10.6% (2.65 pence per share), giving with the interim a total of 13.4% (3.35 pence per share), thus restoring the equivalent of 20% paid in earlier years under the former system of taxation. Treasury permission has been received.

	1974	1973
Turnover	44,802.9	39,779.0
Group profits before tax:		
INDUSTRIAL SERVICES	755.3	973.3
CONSUMER GOODS	1,169.1	1,534.5
PRINTING AND PUBLISHING	403.9	1.0
SPECIALISED ENGINEERING	398.4	304.6
	2,726.7	2,813.4
Deduct:		
Parent Company Expenses, including Bank and Debenture Interest, not otherwise allocated	318.9	261.6
PROFITS BEFORE TAXATION	2,407.8	2,551.8
Taxation on profits of the year, 52% (1973 - 49%)	1,234.3	1,314.5
NET PROFITS AFTER TAXATION	1,173.5	1,237.3
Deduct:		
Minority Interests	13.6	27.5
Amounts applicable to periods prior to acquisition	7.7	21.3
	1,152.2	1,209.8
Dividends:		
Preference Paid of 4.9%	68.7	68.7
Ordinary Interim Paid of 2.8% (1973 - same)	71.1	71.1
Ordinary Final Proposed of 10.6% (1973 - 9.04%)	269.1	229.6
	408.9	369.4
BALANCE UNDISTRIBUTED	743.3	840.4
	1,152.2	1,209.8
Earnings per share	10.88p	11.23p

The 1974 profit, although slightly down on the previous year's comparable figure, shows Gramplan continuing at the new and higher level of achievement set by the major improvement in 1973, and it implies a satisfactory overall performance in a year marked by abnormal external difficulties.

In the interim announcement it was reported that the activities of the London based tunnelling company were being run down. This process is now well advanced, and it is not expected that this company will impose any charge

GRAMPIAN HOLDINGS LIMITED

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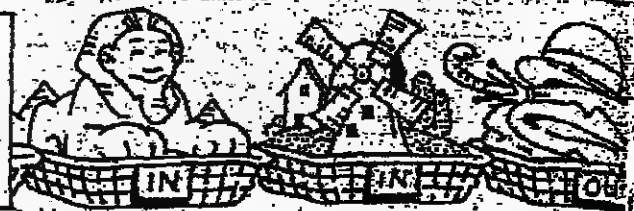
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Focus on overseas appointments



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Further details will be sent without delay.

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Consulting Engineers

 Premier House, Woking, Surrey
 Telephone: Woking 5900

Rhodes University

Grahamstown South Africa

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Labour Migrants on The Reef

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The Director, I.S.E.R., Rhodes University, Grahamstown 6140, South Africa, before 30th April, 1975.



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The rewards and the pitfalls of getting a job abroad

Until about 10 years ago, demand needs to be put in perspective. Of 34,546 men graduating in 1973, 1.2 per cent or 414, found permanent employment overseas. Of 16,577 women graduates, 141, or 0.8 per cent found jobs.

Nevertheless many African and former Commonwealth countries recruit British people through the Crown Agents, and through the Ministry of Overseas Development. (Although Zambia and Malawi have their own recruitment centres in the London embassies.)

The Crown Agents act on behalf of over 140 countries, who will send in for particular skills they need. The Overseas Development Ministry also sends considerable numbers of people out as part of Britain's aid programme.

In 1973, the Crown Agents appointed and compensated more than 800 people with civil engineering training in telecommunication, and then by people in medical training, from nurses therapists to doctors.

The Ministry of Overseas Development is also concerned with these sort of jobs, but its greatest involvement by far is with the appointment of teachers.

The common factor with all these appointments is that they are made for two or three years only. The contracts may be renewable, depending on the wishes of the person concerned, on whether he or she is satisfactory, or on local politics.

The short contract job may also satisfy the desire which many of the applicants have to help develop countries, or it may provide an opportunity to see something of the world before coming back to Britain to settle down.

But there are many problems as well. Apart from the initial difficulty of actually getting a job—and there can be serious difficulties—there may be problems in adjusting and settling down in a new country.

On arrival back in Britain, there may be problems in re-adjusting to a less responsible job, or lower status.

The difficulty of finding a comparable job back in Britain is stressed by some of the consulting agencies which recruit for more senior positions. With more and more executive reduction...

dancies in Britain, people who have gone out to work abroad may find they get "trapped" and have to try to look round for more work in other developing countries when their contract runs out.

University career units also emphasize that the developing world offers very little in the way of a lifetime career. The aim of most governments is to use foreign skill to train local nationals to do the job themselves. There is still a big demand for British skill although ultimately the demand is expected to fall off.

The main demand is for people who have something practical to offer, be it teaching, agriculture, veterinary assistance, medicine, or other training related to the development of natural and human resources. As well as Africa, many Asian countries, and parts of South America are recruiting people from Britain.

The Middle East provides a slightly different demand than these countries. With oil money, countries such as Saudi Arabia and Iran, are carrying out huge national development plans, and many Western companies are competing for contracts. Some of the projects are so large that the companies form consortia to deal with the work.

The people who get sent out to the Middle East are more likely to have been already working for a company in Britain while winning a contract in one of the oil nations. But again, the rewards are usually good, often with the United Kingdom salary being paid into the bank, while the person sent out can enjoy the advantages of allowances and expenses.

In common with the other developing countries, the work is usually on a contract basis.

On a completely different level, the EEC also provides some opportunity for British people seeking jobs overseas.

One of the greatest problems is equivalence or comparability of qualifications, although considerable efforts are being made by the EEC countries and professional bodies to bring more uniform and exchangeable qualifications. If Britain stays in the Community, then there is hope that many more job opportunities will occur, although one of the essentials is going to be a fluent grasp of the particular language.

Robert Parker

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Starting salaries will depend on qualifications. In addition, a reasonable housing allowance and a lump sum furniture allowance will be paid. Other benefits include medical and terminal gratuity and liberal paid holidays.

Suitable candidates will be interviewed in Applications should include age, qualifications, experience and sent, not later than April 30th to:

Auditor General of the Libyan Republic
 c/o Mr. S. Agili,
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 58 Prince's Gate,
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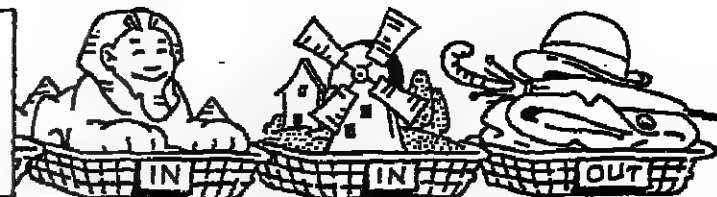
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Focus on overseas appointments



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(Note: £1 sterling = approximately R 1.55c)

The initial salary in each case will be determined according to qualifications and experience. A vacation savings bonus is also payable and the successful applicants will become members of the University's pension and medical aid schemes.

Further particulars and application forms may be obtained from the Registrar, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, 6140, South Africa, to whom completed applications, with copies of recent testimonials and a photograph, should be sent by 15th May, 1975.

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We seek a top-level Manager who speaks Greek very well, if not fluently, who has lived in Greece for at least three years in the past, and who would be prepared to establish himself permanently in Athens.

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We are a commercial company with a staff of 75 employees, dealing with imports and distribution of consumer goods. The company was established 60 years ago and its growth record during the past few years has been impressive.

Among the duties of the new manager will be the differentiation of our activities into the industrial field. Our man will be 35-50 with an excellent record of achievement, preferably a marketing man with a sound knowledge of financial management as well. He should have a proven ability in human relations.

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ments Vacant page 29

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Well educated, personable, 4-5 years' experience in driving a motor vehicle. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the vehicle, and will be required to travel extensively. The position offers a competitive salary and excellent career prospects.

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Experienced Sales Engineer required for the marine industry. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the marine industry, and will be required to travel extensively. The position offers a competitive salary and excellent career prospects.

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required for
Managing Director

This is an excellent position for a first-class man with a clean driving licence. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the vehicle, and will be required to travel extensively. The position offers a competitive salary and excellent career prospects.

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AGED 30-40 UP TO £5,000

Our client is a small Company with a General London office engaged in operating both a Purchasing Agency and a Travel Agency with full I.A.T.A. and A.B.T.A. licences. A Manager is required who will be responsible for the efficient and smooth running of the Company. Experience in either field of operation desirable but by no means essential.

Contact: J. R. V. COVATTS,
7 WINE OFFICE COURT, LONDON, E.C.4.
01-353 1832.

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Progressive Building and Development Group operating from H.Q. in Buckinghamshire requires highly capable and experienced man to control its operations. The successful applicant will be appointed to the Board and will be adequately remunerated.

Write Box 1813 M, The Times

DIRECTOR Task Force

The Trustees are looking for a rather remarkable person to run TASK FORCE

TASK FORCE has built up a unique reputation in education and community work circles, for having thousands of young people in contact for the last 10 years and "self help" work with prisoners.

With 55 full-time staff, on a budget of £210,000, with 1 met by the DES and Local Authority grants, TASK FORCE plans a major development programme with a grant given exclusively for that purpose.

TASK FORCE has been and is making an active contribution to the problems of the retired, through research documents such as "Old and Cold" and "Left in the Cold" and is planning a major investigation into housing conditions of the elderly. The field work is done in London through the DES and Local Authority grants, and is published in the DES and Local Authority journals.

With the present Director returning to the Home Office Education Authority after a two year assignment, TASK FORCE is looking for applicants who should have management experience, knowledge of Local and Central Government, financial acumen, some professional skills in social services, community work or education, and stamina in leading a highly developed participatory organisation.

Salary: circa £4,000 plus year equivalent, initial contract for two years, renewable.

If you really want a job with a difference, which is not only challenging but rewarding, WRITE to confidence to:-

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Imperial War Museum Research Assistants

There are two posts in the following areas of the Museum:

Publications

Involving the writing and editing of a variety of material from information leaflets and exhibition catalogues to full-length scholarly works; undertaking research; assisting with the preparation and mounting of special exhibitions; and answering enquiries. Candidates should have the ability to write clearly and concisely and, preferably, a good knowledge of 20th century history. Appointment as RA I or RA II according to age, qualifications and experience.

Educational Services

... duties include giving talks on a variety of subjects relating to the two World Wars, compiling worksheets and questionnaires, advising teachers on the best use of the Museum's collections, and answering enquiries. Knowledge of 20th century history and the ability to deal courteously and effectively with the general public essential for this RA III post.

For both posts candidates must have a degree in history, or a related subject. FINAL YEAR STUDENTS MAY APPLY.

SALARIES (under review): Research Assistant Grade I £2,100-£4,000; Research Assistant Grade II £2,200-£3,300. Starting salary may be above the minima. Non-contributory pension scheme.

For full details and an application form (to be returned by 23 April 1975) write to Civil Service Commission, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C.4. RG21 1JB, or telephone BASINGSTOKE 2222 ext. 500 (or, for 24 hour answering service, LONDON 01-525 1802). Please quote G1/2/92.

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giving brief personal and career details and mentioning the name of say Company to whom you do not wish your letter to be sent. Your application will be treated in strict confidence.

Secretarial and General Appointments also on page 29

GENERAL

MORTGAGE ADMINISTRATOR

To assist the Mortgage Director

Experience of Mortgage business would be useful but is not essential. Must be able to type and deal with correspondence on own authority. Should be articulate and well-presented as client contact will be necessary. Will be expected to work late—until 6 p.m.—should the infrequent occasion arise.

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56-60, St. Mary's Ave., London, E.C.3A 8BL.

BOOKKEEPER/ACCOUNTANT

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01-235 6436.

INTERVIEWER / MANAGERESS for branches in W.C.1 and W.C.2. Must be a personable, energetic, and experienced lady with a minimum of 5 years' experience in a similar position. Salary £2,500 p.a. plus benefits. Please write to: **RECRUITMENT**, 10, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C.4 6JF.

KENSINGTON Sales office of hotel group needs Admin. Secretary to complete their happy team. Good telephone manner and pleasant personality essential. £2,000 p.a. plus benefits. Please write to: **RECRUITMENT**, 10, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C.4 6JF.

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RECEPTIONIST/TELEPHONIST for private clinic. S. Africa. Salary £2,000 p.a. plus benefits. Please write to: **RECRUITMENT**, 10, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C.4 6JF.

S.W.1 Solicitors require lady with good telephone manner and pleasant personality. Salary £2,500 p.a. plus benefits. Please write to: **RECRUITMENT**, 10, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C.4 6JF.

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GENERAL

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